



# PLUTUS IAS

## Weekly Current Affairs

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# POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

## ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA – CURRENT RELEVANCE OF ITS FUNCTIONS AND POWERS

### WHY IN THE NEWS?



- Recently the Election Commission of India has released the dates for the upcoming 18th Lok Sabha General Election 2024.
- According to Rajiv Kumar, Chief Election Commissioner of the Election Commission of India, the general elections for the upcoming Lok Sabha will be conducted in seven phases and in a total of 44 days.
- The counting of votes for the general elections for the 18th Lok Sabha will be completed on 04 June 2024.
- Recently, Election Commissioner of India Arun Goyal resigned from the post of Election Commissioner even before the announcement of the dates of Lok Sabha elections to be held in India in the year 2024.
- Anup Chandra Pandey, the second Election Commissioner of India, retired from his post on 14 February 2024.
- After meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Law Minister Arjun Meghwal to fill the vacancies of Election Commissioners arising out of the retirement of Election Commission of India Anup Chandra Pandey and resignation of Arun Goyal, senior Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said that 'The names of former IAS officers Gyanesh Kumar and Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu have been finalized for the new election commissioners.'

- Recently the Central Government has announced the names of two Election Commissioners. A three-member selection committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has appointed former IAS officers Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu as the new Election Commissioners in the Election Commission. The Central Government has also issued a notification for this.
- Former IAS officer Gyanesh Kumar has been a 1988 batch IAS officer of Kerala cadre, while Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu, former Chief Secretary of Uttarakhand, has been a 1988 batch IAS officer of Uttarakhand cadre.
- At present Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar was holding this post as the only member of the Election Commission of India.

### INTRODUCTION TO ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA:



- The Election Commission of India was established on 25 January 1950.
- That's why in India on 25th January is celebrated as National Voters' Day.
- The Election Commission of India is an autonomous constitutional authority/institution empowered under Article 324 of the Constitution of India to superintend, direct and prepare electoral rolls for elections to the Parliament of India, State Legislatures as well as to the offices of President and Vice-President of India. Provision has been made for the Election Commission in India to control and exercise control over it. Therefore, the Election Commission is the apex body responsible for the elections held at both the central and state levels.

- The Constitution of India makes a separate provision for the State Election Commission to conduct the election processes of Panchayat and Municipality or Municipal Corporation in the states of India. Therefore, the State Election Commission of the respective state is the responsible institution for the elections of Panchayats and Municipalities in the states.

#### STRUCTURE OF ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA :

- The Election Commission of India, formed in 1950, originally had only one Election Commissioner, but as a result of the Election Commissioner Amendment Act 1989, it has been made a multi-member body.
- The Election Commission also includes the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other Election Commissioners, who are selected by the President from time to time.
- At present the Election Commission of India consists of a Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners.
- The Election Commission at the state level is assisted by the Chief Electoral Officer who is an IAS rank officer.

#### CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER AND OTHER ELECTION COMMISSIONERS (APPOINTMENT, CONDITIONS OF SERVICE AND TERM OF OFFICE) BILL, 2023

- This Bill replaces the Election Commission (Conditions of Service and Conduct of Business of Election Commissioners) Act, 1991.
- This includes provisions related to the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners, their salary and their removal.

#### PROCESS OF APPOINTMENT ACCORDING TO THIS BILL :

- The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners of the Election Commission of India shall be appointed by the President of India on the recommendation of the Selection Committee.
- This selection committee will have the leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha as a member and if no party in the Lok Sabha has been recognized as the leader of the opposition, then the leader of the largest opposition party in the Lok Sabha will be included in it.
- The recommendations of the selection committee

will be valid even if there is a vacancy in this committee.

- The Bill proposes to establish a Search Committee to prepare a panel of five persons/members to consider the posts of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners.
- The search committee will be headed by the Cabinet Secretary and will also include two members not below the rank of Secretary and who should have knowledge and experience of election related matters.

#### CHANGES IN THE SALARY AND CONDITIONS OF THE CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER AND OTHER ELECTION COMMISSIONERS IN THIS BILL :

- According to the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners Bill 2023, the salary and service conditions of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners will be the same as that of the Cabinet Secretary.
- Under the 1991 Act, their salary was equal to the salary of a judge of the Supreme Court of India.

#### TENURE OF ELECTION COMMISSIONER :



**DO YOU KNOW?**

As per **Article 324 of the Constitution of India**, the superintendence, direction and control of elections to the Parliament, State Legislatures, the office of the President of India and the office of the Vice-President of India is vested in the **Election Commission Of India**.

Elections to local bodies do not come under the purview of **Election Commission Of India**.

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- There is no clear direction in the Constitution of India regarding the tenure of Election Commissioners, but as per the Election Commission Act of 1991 amending the Constitution of India, the tenure of the Chief Election Commissioner of Election Commissioner in India is for a maximum of six years or



till the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier. You can remain on this post only till the earlier date. This tenure is counted from the date of assuming charge.

- They have equal status to the judges of the Supreme Court of India and receive the same salary and allowances.
- The Chief Election Commissioner in India is generally a member of the Indian Civil Service, often from the Indian Administrative Service. Those who get rights from Article 324 of the Constitution of India and their rights are protected.
- The Election Commission of India is one of the few constitutional authorities/institutions in India that function autonomously. Other such institutions include the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), the High Court and the Supreme Court and the Union Public Service Commission.

#### PROCESS FOR REMOVAL OF THE CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER OF INDIA AND THE ELECTION COMMISSIONER :

- The Chief Election Commissioner of India can be removed from his post in the same way as a judge of the Supreme Court.
- Removal of the Chief Election Commissioner of India from his office by impeachment requires a resolution passed by the Parliament of India with a two-thirds majority in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.
- Their removal can be done only on the basis of misbehavior, favoritism towards any political party or if they are proved incapable of completing their work.
- It is important to note that no Chief Election Commissioner has ever been impeached in India.
- Other Election Commissioners appointed as members of the Election Commission of India may be removed by the President of India on the recommendation of the Chief Election Commissioner.
- However, this provision has never been implemented in India yet.
- Before the Lok Sabha elections in 2009, Chief Election Commissioner N Gopalswami had recommended the removal of Election Commissioner Naveen Chawla. The reason behind this recommendation was the potential conflict of interest due to Chawla's upcoming appointment as Chief Election

Commissioner and his alleged biased political party dealings. However, President of India Pratibha Patil opined that such a recommendation was not binding on the President and she rejected it. Following Gopalswami's retirement the following month, Chawla took over as Chief Election Commissioner and supervised and conducted the 2009 Lok Sabha general elections.

#### POWERS OF ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA :



The powers of the Election Commission of India can be mainly classified into three categories –

1. Administrative powers
2. Advisory powers
3. Quasi – Judicial powers

#### ADMINISTRATIVE POWERS OF ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA :

- The Election Commission of India is empowered to function in accordance with the Delimitation Commission Act and determine the territorial boundaries of electoral constituencies for various elections.
- It has the power to register and deregister any political party or entity.
- It is authorized to promulgate 'Model Code of Conduct' for election campaigns in India and ensure its implementation.
- This commission has the power to monitor election expenses of political parties, thereby ensuring a level playing field for all parties, irrespective of their size and spending capacity.
- It may appoint officers from various departments of the Civil Service of India as election observers and expenditure observers.

### ADVISORY POWERS OF ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA :

- The Election Commission of India has the power to advise the President of India in the matter of determining the qualifications and disqualifications of Members of Parliament and the conditions for elections thereto.
- This Commission also advises the Governors of the concerned State on the disqualification of members of the State Legislatures.
- It advises the High Courts and the Supreme Court on matters relating to post-election disputes between candidates and political parties in general elections in India.
- Post-election disputes related to the election of the President and Vice President are referred to the Supreme Court. Disputes relating to Parliament and State Legislatures are referred to the High Courts.

### QUASI – JUDICIAL POWERS OF THE ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA :

- The Election Commission of India has the authority to settle disputes related to the recognition given to political parties and candidates in India.
- It has powers to act as a court for cases relating to disputes arising out of allocation of election symbols to political parties and candidates.
- Elections related to the elections of Panchayats and Municipalities held in the states are conducted under the supervision of the State Election Commission. State election commissions are advised by and accountable to the Election Commission of India.

### The powers of the Election Commission are enshrined in various articles of the Indian Constitution, including :

**Article 324 :** It gives the ECI the responsibility to directly monitor, control and direct national and state-level elections.

**Article 325 :** This article stipulates that the inclusion and exclusion of names in the electoral roll should be on the basis of Indian citizenship. It states that no citizen of India above voting age should be excluded from the rolls or included in the special electoral roll on the basis of race, caste, religion or sex.

**Article 326 :** This article establishes universal adult suffrage as the basis for election to all levels of elected government.

**Article 327 :** It outlines the responsibilities of the ECI and the Parliament with respect to the conduct of national elections.

**Article 328 :** It defines the roles and responsibilities of state legislatures in relation to state-level elections.

**Article 329 :** It prohibits the court's intervention in election-related matters unless specifically asked to provide its views.

### MAJOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA :



The Election Commission of India plays an important role in the democratic processes of the country. **Following are some of the major roles and responsibilities of the Election Commission of India –**

- **To ensure a fair electoral process :** The Election Commission of India is entrusted with the responsibility of conducting elections at various levels including national, state and local elections. It is responsible for monitoring the entire election process from announcement of election dates to declaration of results.
- **Voter Registration :** The Election Commission of India facilitates the voter registration process to ensure that eligible citizens can exercise their right to vote in India. It conducts voter registration drives and updates voter lists and issues voter identity cards to eligible persons.
- **Ensuring independence and impartiality :** With the aim of ensuring fair and balanced representation, The ECI delimits electoral boundaries. It periodically reviews and revises constituency boundaries based on population changes, attempting to maintain approximately the same number of voters in each constituency.
- **Announcing election schedule :** The Election Commission of India schedules elections in India, which

includes announcing the dates for filing of nominations, voting and counting of votes. It ensures that the entire electoral process is conducted within a reasonable time frame.

- **Implementing Model Code of Conduct :** To maintain ethical standards and fair practices during elections in India, the Election Commission of India enforces a Model Code of Conduct. This code regulates the conduct of political parties and candidates, preventing abuse of power or unfair advantage.
- **Ensuring electoral laws and rules :** The Election Commission of India makes and enforces the electoral laws and rules that govern the conduct of elections. It strives to ensure transparency, fairness and adherence to the Constitution and relevant law throughout the electoral process.
- **Deploying election observers :** The Election Commission of India deploys election observers to monitor the conduct of elections in India. These observers oversee polling stations, observe the vote counting process and report any irregularities or violations to the ECI.
- **Scheduling voter education and awareness programs :** Recognizing the importance of a democratic and active citizenry in India, the Election Commission of India organizes voter education and awareness programmes. These programs aim to increase awareness among citizens about the importance of voting and their rights as voters, with the aim of ultimately increasing voting percentage and promoting informed decision making.
- **Granting recognition to political parties :** The Election Commission of India grants recognition to political parties in India based on specific criteria. It ensures that recognized parties comply with financial disclosure requirements, adhere to the code of conduct and meet other eligibility criteria to participate in elections.
- **To provide election monitoring and enforcement and election security :** The Election Commission of India gives priority to the security of the electoral process, collaborating with various law enforcement agencies in India. It takes measures to prevent electoral malpractices, maintain law and order during elections and provide a safe environment for voters.
- **Protecting democratic values :** The Election Commission of India is entrusted with the important responsibility of conducting elections at various levels

including State Assemblies, Parliament, President, Vice President and local governing bodies. Therefore, its primary objective is to maintain democratic values by ensuring that the electoral process is conducted in a fair, transparent and democratic manner.

- **Technological Advancements :** The Election Commission of India has adopted technological advancements to streamline the electoral process and ensure accuracy and efficiency. Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) have revolutionized voting, providing a secure and reliable way to cast and count votes during elections in India.
- India was an early adopter of electronic voting, implementing it nationwide during parliamentary elections in 2014. This was a significant achievement given India's large and diverse population, which also includes many rural areas with illiterate citizens.
- The importance of the office of the Chief Election Commissioner in the Indian political process became widely recognized during the tenure of T. N. Seshan from 1990 to 1996. Seshan is famous for his determined efforts to tackle corruption and manipulation in Indian elections.

#### IMPORTANCE OF ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA :



- The Election Commission of India has played a vital role in successfully conducting national and state elections since 1952. Today, it actively works towards promoting greater participation of people in the electoral process. The Commission has effectively established discipline among political parties by threatening to revoke recognition if they fail to maintain internal party democracy. It upholds the constitutional values of equality, equity, fairness, independence and rule of law in its monitoring, direction and control over electoral governance.
- The Election Commission ensures that elections

are conducted with the highest standards of credibility, fairness, transparency, integrity, accountability, autonomy and professionalism. It strives to create an inclusive and voter-centric environment while ensuring participation of all eligible citizens. The Commission engages with political parties and all stakeholders to serve the best interests of the electoral process. It also plays an important role in raising awareness about the electoral process and governance among stakeholders including political parties, voters, election officials, candidates and the general public. These efforts are aimed at increasing trust and confidence in India's electoral system.

### CURRENT CHALLENGES BEFORE THE ELECTION COMMISSION IN INDIA :



- The Election Commission of India is struggling to stem the rise in violence and electoral malpractices fueled by monetary influence, resulting in the criminalization of politics.
- The Commission lacks sufficient authority and resources to effectively regulate political parties, including enforcing intra-party democracy and regulating party finances.
- There are concerns about the Election Commission's declining independence from the executive, which has negatively impacted its reputation.
- Allegations of electronic voting machines (EVMs) malfunctioning, hacking or failing to register votes have significantly eroded public confidence in the Election Commission.

### CONCLUSION/ WAY FORWARD :

- The Election Commission of India is instrumental in ensuring the integrity of elections and maintaining democratic principles. Through its efforts to conduct fair elections, promote voter awareness and education of the importance of their vote, and implement

anti-corruption measures, it plays an important role in empowering Indian citizens and strengthening the country's democratic structure. . Therefore, to fulfill its underlying objectives, it should make the public aware and educated about the democratic electoral processes of India.

- The Election Commission of India is an important constitutional body entrusted with the responsibility of supervising, managing and controlling the electoral process in India. Therefore, it should ensure that India's electoral process is conducted in a fair and neutral manner.
- The Election Commission should remain alert and closely monitor any collusion within the lower levels of the civil and police bureaucracy that may favor the ruling party. This will help in maintaining the integrity and fairness of the electoral process.
- To regain public confidence amid the ongoing controversies over electronic voting machines (EVMs), the Commission should increase deployment of Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail System (VVPAT) in more constituencies.
- The mandate of the Commission and the procedures facilitating its functioning need to be provided with strong legal backing. This will increase its effectiveness and ensure smooth conduct of elections.
- We will also have to ensure such safeguards that only ethical and competent individuals hold leadership positions in the Election Commission and other public institutions in India. This will help in maintaining the credibility and relevance of the Commission.
- The report of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) recommended the establishment of a collegium headed by the Prime Minister, which would include the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, the Law Minister and the Deputy Speaker of the State. As a member of the assembly. This collegium will make recommendations to the President for the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners. This proposal should be considered to enhance the selection process for these posts and ensure competent leadership within the Commission.
- While the Election Commission of India is right to defend electronic voting machines, it needs to do more to ensure public trust in these machines.
- In the light of the recent judgment of the Supreme



Court of India in the conflict between the claim of right to privacy of those making donations through electoral bonds and the right to information of the voter, the evasive attitude of the ECI is completely inappropriate.

- The Election Commission of India should know that when it comes to assessing India, the world's largest democratic system, all eyes are on it, because in a democracy, fairness and transparency of voting by the public is of utmost importance. It is necessary so that India's democratic system can survive and we can become their leader and guide in teaching democratic values to the world as an inclusive and democratic country. Only then can the victory of democracy be truly ensured. We should also not forget that India was the first country in the world to have a republican system.



## MERGING CANTONMENTS WITH MUNICIPALITIES

### WHY IN THE NEWS?

Lately, the government has released a notice to remove the status of civilian zones from 10 out of 58 cantonments across the country. These zones will now become part of the respective State Municipalities. The aim is to separate specific areas within these cantonments and integrate them with the local governing bodies of the state.

### ABOUT CANTONMENTS

Cantonments are designated areas in India that primarily house military personnel and their supporting infrastructure. Originally temporary military camps, they have evolved into semi-permanent settlements with housing, offices, schools, and other facilities for both soldiers and their families.

- A Colonial Legacy

The history of cantonments in India is linked to the British East India Company. The **first one was established in 1765 near Calcutta (Kolkata)** following the **Battle of Plassey in 1757**. Initially meant for troop deployment, these areas have expanded to include civilians who provide essential support services to the military.

- Governance with Checks and Balances

The **Cantonments Act of 1924** formalised their administration. This act established a legal framework for managing, developing, and regulating these areas. Cantonments are classified (**Class I to Class IV**) **based on size and population**. Each category has a board with equal representation from elected civilians and nominated/ex-officio members, **including the military commander and a Defence Estates Organisation officer**.

### CANTONMENT ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA

#### Structure and Representation: Ensuring Diverse Voices

- Cantonments in India are categorised into **four classes (I to IV) based on size and population**. Each class has a dedicated board responsible for various administrative functions. These boards are structured to ensure balanced representation. They **include elected civilians alongside nominated and ex-officio members**.
- The **station commander of the cantonment** serves as the **ex-officio president of the board**, providing crucial military leadership. An **officer from the Defence Estates Organisation** acts as the **chief executive** and member-secretary, bringing expertise in managing these specialised areas. This structure **ensures a voice for both civilian residents and the military within the cantonment**.

#### CENTRALISED OVERSIGHT WITH LOCAL CONTROL

The Ministry of Defence, through an inter-services organisation, **directly oversees the administration of cantonments**. This centralised control aligns with the Indian Constitution's designation of "**Urban Self Governance of the Cantonments**" as a subject under the central government's purview. Currently, there are approximately **62 notified cantonments** across the country governed under the Cantonments Act.

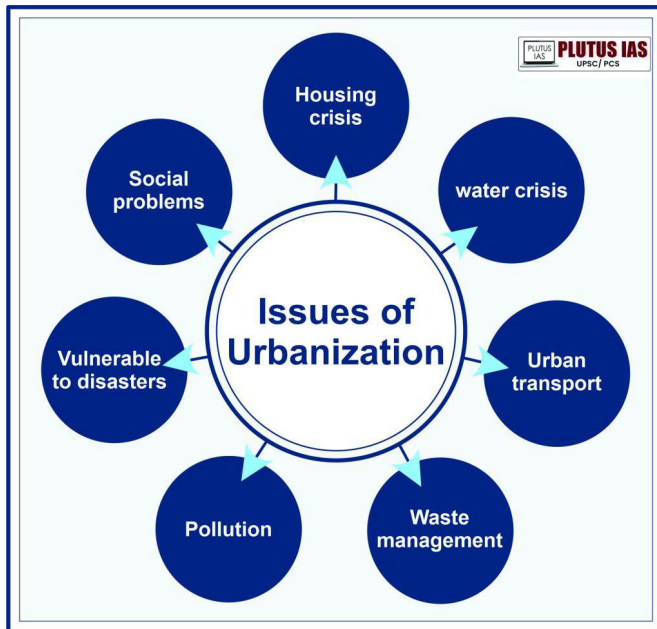
#### REGULATION OF URBAN GOVERNANCE

Urban governance in India is a multifaceted system-

1. Ministry of Defence oversees cantonments
2. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs takes the

lead for most urban areas in the country.

3. Ministry of Home Affairs manages urban governance in Union Territories.
- At the state level, the picture gets even more intricate. Since “urban governance” falls under the **state list** of the Constitution, the administrative framework and regulations for **Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)** vary across states.
  - The Constitution (**74th Amendment**) Act of 1992 played a significant role in **establishing ULBs, including municipal corporations, as institutions of local self-government**. This act empowered states to **devolve specific functions, authority, and revenue collection powers to these bodies** while mandating regular elections for their representatives.



**ARGUMENTS FOR MERGING CANTONMENTS WITH MUNICIPALITIES**

- **Uniform Governance:** Currently, cantonments operate under a separate system compared to municipalities. Merging them would bring uniformity in laws, regulations, and administrative processes for all residents.
- **Improved Civic Amenities:** By combining resources and expertise, a unified administration could potentially lead to better infrastructure development, waste management, and public services across the entire area.
- **Enhanced Citizen Participation:** Residents of cantonments often have a limited say in local gover-

nance. Merging could give them a stronger voice through participation in municipal elections and decision-making processes.

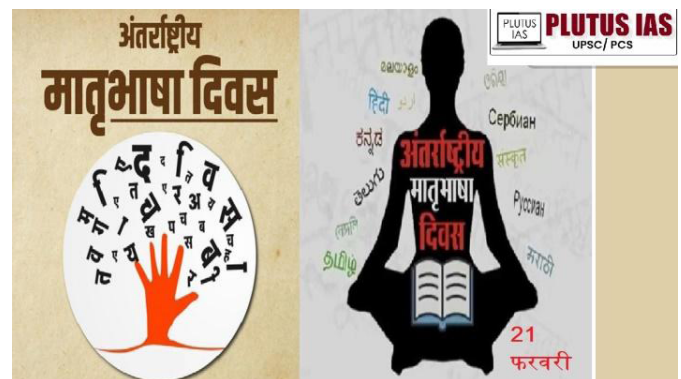
- **Reduced Duplication of Efforts:** Separate administrations for cantonments and municipalities can lead to duplication of efforts and inefficient resource allocation. Merging could streamline operations and optimise resource utilisation.

**ISSUES TO CONSIDER**

- **Security Concerns:** Military establishments within cantonments require specific security protocols. Merging raises concerns about maintaining those protocols while integrating civilian areas.
- **Financial Strain on Municipalities:** Some municipalities might struggle to absorb the additional infrastructure and service needs of cantonments, potentially leading to financial strain.
- **Resistance from Existing Power Structures:** Existing cantonment board members and municipal councilors might resist a merger that could change their roles or influence.
- **Loss of Unique Character:** Cantonments often have a distinct character due to their military history and planned layout. Merging could lead to a loss of this unique identity.

**THREE – LANGUAGE FORMULA IN THE CONTEXT OF ENDANGERED LANGUAGES**

**WHY IN THE NEWS ?**

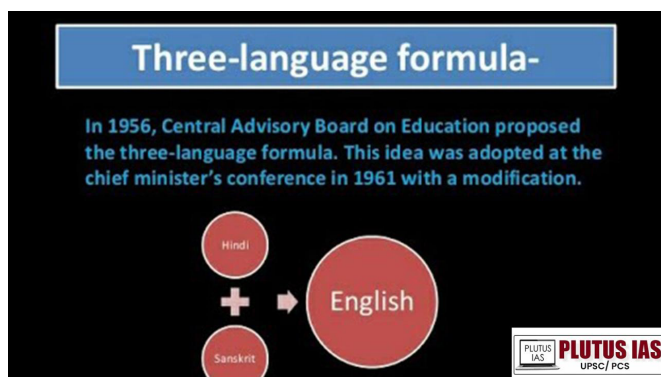


- Recently, the Home Minister of India, Amit Shah, while underlining the importance of mother tongue in the Parliament, stressed on the importance of imparting education to children in their mother tongue at the school level in India and called for the National Education Policy 2020 to be adopted by all

the states of the country. Said.

- Recently, the whole world has celebrated every year on 21st February with the aim of promoting linguistic and cultural diversity in the world and to bring awareness towards the mother tongue is celebrated as 'International Mother Language Day'.
- Some states of India, especially states like Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Tripura, have opposed the implementation of the three-language formula contained in the National Education Policy 2020 and have talked about forceful imposition of Hindi.
- According to the recently released UNESCO Atlas of Endangered Languages in many countries of the world, currently 577 languages are listed as critically endangered.

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE THREE LANGUAGE FORMULA :



After independence in India, the three language formula was first mentioned by the National Education Commission (Kothari Commission) in the policy of the year 1968. **Which are as follows –**

(1) First language- The first language to be studied is the mother tongue or regional language.

(2) Second language – Hindi speaking state – Any other modern Indian language or English

Non-Hindi speaking states – Hindi or English

(3) Third language – Hindi speaking state – Third language is English or any modern Indian language (which is not taken as second language).

Non-Hindi speaking states – Third language: English or any modern Indian language (not taken as second language)

#### KOTHARI COMMISSION AND THREE – LANGUAGES FORMULA (1964-1966) :



- The National Education Commission itself is known as Kothari Commission.
- It was presided over by Daulat Singh Kothari, who was the then Chairman of the University Grants Commission of India and also the Chairman of the National Education Commission, hence it is also known as Kothari Commission.
- It was an apex commission set up by the Government of India to examine and advise on all aspects of the educational sector in India.
- Kothari Commission itself had recommended that in Hindi speaking areas, in addition to Hindi and English, there should be provision for study of a modern Indian language or one of the languages of South India and in non-Hindi speaking states, there should be provision for study of Hindi along with state languages and English. Arrangements should be made. This system is known as the three-language formula.

#### OFFICIAL LANGUAGE RESOLUTION 1968 AND THREE LANGUAGE FORMULA :

- To implement the recommendations of the Kothari Commission, a resolution was passed by the Parliament of India which was 'known as 'Official Language Resolution 1968 '
- According to the Official Language Resolution 1968 – To maintain the spirit of unity and integrity of India and to facilitate communication among the people in different parts of the country, it is necessary to implement the three-language formula prepared by the Central Government of India in consultation with the State Governments. Will be fully implemented in all states.
- Therefore, in this resolution, it was passed that in addition to Hindi and English, in Hindi speaking areas, there should be a provision for study of a



modern Indian language or one of the languages of South India and in non-Hindi speaking states, there should be a provision for study of Hindi along with state languages and English. Arrangements should be made.

### NEW EDUCATION POLICY, 2020 AND THREE – LANGUAGE FORMULA :

- For the new National Education Policy 2020, a committee was constituted by the Central Government under the chairmanship of Dr. Kasturirangan, President of the Indian Academy of Sciences Bangalore and General Secretary of the Indian Science Congress and a renowned scientist of India. Since the three language formula could not be fully implemented in practice, it was also mentioned in the new National Education Policy 2020 that the above mentioned three language formula will be implemented. Many states have objected to this and have also raised objections.

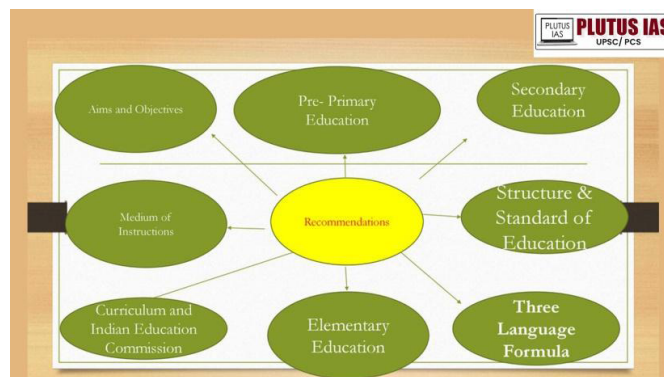
#### According to the National Education Policy –

- Education in mother tongue or local or regional language – It states that the medium of instruction up to grade 5 will be the home or local or regional language or at least the mother tongue which may be extended to grade 8 or beyond.
- Study of 2 Indian languages – The student will have to study 2 Indian languages out of the three.
- While implementing the three-language formula, the aspirations of the state, the general public and the people will be kept in mind. No language will be imposed on any state.
- States, any region of India and even students are free to choose three languages.
- Students studying in class 6 or 7 can change one or more of those three languages.
- This will promote multilingualism and national unity.
- There is no specific language that can be imposed on any state. It is for the State to decide whether – “**What is their preferred language?**”

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF THREE – LANGUAGE FORMULA IN THE NEW NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020 :

- Under the new National Education Policy 2020, a broad base has been provided for implementing the three language formula for imparting education

at the school level in India. Following are the main points of this policy:



#### EMPHASIS ON ELEMENTARY EDUCATION :

- This policy emphasizes the importance of early childhood education in helping children learn languages. It suggests that children between the age of 3 to 8 years should study in their native language or regional language.

#### RESILIENCE :

- This new policy allows a wide range of options for language learning. The third language can be English or any other language of the student's choice, while the first two languages must be native Indian languages of their state or region. In non-Hindi speaking states, where there are concerns about the imposition of Hindi, this provision is unlikely to create opposition to this formula.

#### TEACHERS TRAINING :

- Under the policy, emphasis has been laid on the need for trained teachers to successfully implement the three language formula. It suggested that teachers should be given training in multilingualism and efforts should be made to find teachers fluent in local languages.

#### CHANGES IN THE EXAMINATION SYSTEM AND OVER-ALL EVALUATION METHOD OF STUDENTS :

- This as per the policy, students should be assessed on the basis of their command over all the three languages including English.

#### AVAILABILITY OF ONLINE TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER LEARNING MATERIALS :

- To enable students to learn in their mother tongues, the policy encourages the creation of online resources and learning materials in native Indian languages.



**PRESENT NEED OF TRILINGUAL FORMULA IN INDIA :**



- According to the report of this committee, language learning is an important part of a child’s cognitive development. Therefore, its primary objective at the school level in India is to promote multilingualism and national harmony across the country.

**PROBLEMS ARISING IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE – LANGUAGE FORMULA IN INDIA :**

- States like Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Tripura are not ready to teach Hindi in their schools. Nor has any Hindi-speaking state included any South Indian language in its school curriculum.
- State governments in India often do not have sufficient resources available to implement the three-tier linguistic formula. Inadequacy of resources is also a significant hindering aspect in implementing the three-language formula at the school level in India.

**CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS RELATED TO LANGUAGE IN THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION :**

Languages of India					
Schedule 8 of the Constitution of India					
As per Articles 344(1) and 351 of the Indian Constitution, the eighth schedule includes the recognition of the following 22 languages					
Sr.	Language	SR	Language	SR	Language
1	Assamese	8	Kashmiri	15	Odia
2	Bengali	9	Konkani	16	Punjabi
3	Bodo	10	Maithili	17	Sanskrit
4	Dogri	11	Malayalam	18	Santhali
5	Gujarati	12	Manipuri (Meitei)	19	Sindhi
6	Hindi	13	Marathi	20	Tamil
7	Kannada	14	Nepali	21	Telugu
22	Urdu				

- Language and culture have a deep and complementary relationship because language and culture are not contradictory to each other but both are linked to the mutual identity of the people.
- The Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution deals with the provisions on the language of India.

- There are 22 official languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution.
- Education in India is a state subject. Therefore, the states of India have the right to make policy for education at the school level.
- Article 29 of the Indian Constitution states that – No person shall be discriminated against on grounds of religion, race, caste, language or any of them in India.
- This article states that – **“Any section of citizens having their own distinct language, script or culture shall have the right to preserve it.”**
- **Article 343 :** This article of the Indian Constitution belongs to the official language of the Union of India. According to this article, Hindi should be in Devanagari script and the international form of Indian numerals should be followed in terms of numbers. This article also states that English will continue to be used as the official language for the first 15 years after the adoption of the Constitution.
- **Article 346 :** This article provides for the official language for communication between the States in India and between the Union and the State. According to the article, for the said work **“Authorized”** language will be used. However if two or more states agree that the language of communication between them will be Hindi, then Hindi can be used as the official language.
- **Article 347 :** Special provisions with respect to the language spoken by any part of the population of a State. This article empowers the President to select a language as the official language of a State and, if a substantial section of the population of a State desires that the language spoken by it be recognized by the State, he may direct Such language may also be given official recognition throughout that State or in any part thereof for such purpose as it may specify.
- **Article 350 (A) :** There is a provision under this article that Provides facilities for education in mother tongue at primary level.
- **Article 350 (B) :** This article provides for the appointment of a special officer for linguistic minorities in India. The special officer to be appointed for linguistic minorities will be appointed by the President. It will investigate all matters relating to the protection of linguistic minorities and submit its report directly to the President of India. The President of India

can present that report before each House of the Parliament or send it to the respective State/State Governments.

- **Article 351** : Under this article of the Indian Constitution Provides power to the Central Government to issue directions for the development of Hindi language.

**MOST ENDANGERED LANGUAGES IN THE WORLD :**



- Before any language or dialect becomes extinct, it goes through several stages. The first of these stages is potentially endangered, which occurs when a foreign language becomes the dominant language of business and education while the potentially endangered language continues to be spoken by both adults and children at home. As the dominant language makes the potentially threatened language less and less useful, the language moves into endangered status.

**In terms of language, before any language becomes extinct, it goes through the following stages:**

1. critically endangered language,
2. Dying language,
3. Extinct language.

- According to the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Endangered Languages, there are currently 577 languages listed as critically endangered. This classification means that there are only a few people in the oldest living generation who can speak or understand that language and many of these people are not even fully fluent in that language.
- About 537 of the world's languages are considered critically endangered, meaning they are used only by the oldest surviving generation.
- Of these 577 critically endangered languages, many

have only one speaker left and many have become extinct many years ago.

- Some of the most criticized languages include Yama-na (spoken in Chile), Taje (spoken in Indonesia), Pemono (spoken in Venezuela), Laua (spoken in Papua New Guinea), Kulon- Pazeh (spoken in Taiwan), Caixana (spoken in Brazil), Dai Hoi (spoken in Brazil), Dumpelas (spoken in Indonesia), Bikya (spoken in Cameroon), and Apiaka (spoken in Brazil spoken). The sole remaining speaker of these languages has not, in many cases, been heard from for many years.
- In fact, some linguists believe that most of these languages have become extinct many years ago, with the exception of Kulon-Pazeh, which is still spoken as a second language by a small population.

**CONCLUSION / PATH TO SOLUTION :**



- If the three language formula of the new National Education Policy 2020 is fully implemented in the education system of India, Hindi and other Indian languages will get an opportunity to prosper and multilingualism and cultural harmony will increase in India.
- In the context of the extinction of the language, the unity and integrity of the country can be ensured by the three-language formula and along with Hindi, other Indian languages will also develop as a language of communication among the people in dif-

ferent parts of the country.

- In the three-language formula, provision has also been made for the study of English language in Hindi speaking and non-Hindi speaking states. We all know that today the English language dominates all branches of knowledge and science in higher education and it is still lacking in Hindi and other Indian languages.
- Therefore, through the three-language formula, the subjects of all branches of knowledge in higher education can be translated into Indian languages and education can be provided to the students in their mother tongue or in the regional languages related to that state or even in Hindi language. The biggest example of which is the use of Hindi language as the language of medical studies in Madhya Pradesh.
- In the era of globalization, Hindi language or other Indian languages should also include words related to law or science and technology as core words so that the language can become more prosperous.
- If any language is spoken in the folk life or is used by the local people, then that language or dialect will always survive, otherwise the existence of that language may be in danger or may become extinct because Kabir, a thinker of folk sensibility, It is also said that – “Well **water is cultured, well water is flowing.**” Therefore, instead of getting involved in opposition to the linguistic power, we should accept the words of the folk language as it is and include them in the Indian language so that it can become more rich and useful to the people and its existence can also be preserved.

## MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

### WHY IN THE NEWS?

The implementation of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) has commenced following the Election Commission of India's (ECI) declaration of voting dates for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. This marks a notable milestone in electoral administration.

### ABOUT MCC

- The **Model Code of Conduct (MCC)** stands as a collective agreement among political parties, wherein they commit to regulating their behaviour during elections according to its provisions.

- This collaborative effort aids the Election Commission (EC) in fulfilling its **constitutional mandate under Article 324, empowering it to oversee and ensure the conduct of free and fair elections** for both the Parliament and State Legislatures.
- Operative from the announcement of the election schedule until the declaration of results, the **MCC imposes restrictions on governmental actions such as announcing financial grants, promising infrastructure development, or making ad hoc appointments in government or public enterprises.**
- While lacking statutory authority, the MCC has gained significance over the past decade due to its stringent enforcement by the EC. In instances where specific MCC provisions are breached, corresponding legal statutes such as the **Indian Penal Code (IPC) of 1860, Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) of 1973, and Representation of the People Act (RPA) of 1951** can be invoked for enforcement.

### HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF MCC

- The inception of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) **traces back to Kerala, where, in 1960, ahead of the state's Assembly elections, the administration formulated a preliminary code** addressing crucial facets of electoral activities such as processions, political gatherings, and speeches.
- Formally **introduced** by the Election Commission of India (ECI) **in 1974**, the MCC underwent institutionalisation with the establishment of bureaucratic entities at the district level to supervise its adherence. Initially, **up until 1977, the MCC primarily regulated the conduct of political parties and candidates.**
- In response to instances of incumbent parties abusing their authority by **monopolising public spaces and utilising public funds** for promotional activities, the **Election Commission expanded the MCC in 1979** to incorporate guidelines specifically targeting ruling political parties.
- The revised MCC comprised seven segments, including provisions dedicated to governing the behaviour of ruling parties subsequent to the announcement of elections:
  1. **Part I:** General conduct guidelines for candidates and political entities.
  2. **Parts II and III:** Regulations concerning public assemblies and processions.



3. **Parts IV and V:** Directives for conduct on polling day and within polling stations. Since its revision in **1979**, the MCC has undergone multiple amendments, with the most recent update occurring in 2014.

### SIGNIFICANT PROVISIONS OF THE MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT (MCC)

The MCC outlines guidelines for ethical conduct during elections in India. Here's a breakdown of its main provisions:

#### PROMOTING HARMONY

- Parties and candidates should avoid actions that could worsen existing divisions between castes, communities, religions, or language groups.
- Similar to **Section 123(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951**, the MCC prohibits using religion, race, caste, community, or language to spread hatred or manipulate voters.
- Criticism of opposing parties should focus on their policies, past performance, and plans, not personal attacks.

#### ORGANISING EVENTS

- Parties must **notify local police about the time and location of public meetings to allow for proper security arrangements.**
- If multiple candidates plan processions on the same route, communication beforehand is crucial to avoid clashes.
- Displaying or **burning effigies of political figures** from other parties is **not permitted.**

#### POLLING DAY PROCEDURES

- Only eligible voters and individuals with official Election Commission (EC) authorisation can enter polling booths.
- Authorised party representatives at polling stations must **wear clear identification badges or cards.**
- Any information slips they provide to voters must be on plain white paper with no symbols, candidate names, or party affiliations.
- The **EC will appoint observers to monitor the election** and address any concerns raised by candidates regarding the conduct of the polls.

### RESTRICTIONS ON THE RULING PARTY

- Introduced in 1979, the **MCC imposes limitations on the ruling party's behaviour.** It prohibits ministers from combining official visits with election campaigning or using government resources for political purposes.

### CHALLENGES WITH THE MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT (MCC)

The MCC, while promoting fair elections, faces some limitations:

- **Limited Enforcement:** The MCC lacks legal teeth. This raises questions about its effectiveness and the Election Commission's ability to ensure a fair playing field.
- **New Threats:** Technological advancements and social media have given rise to new forms of electoral malpractice, like using them to influence voters illegally. The MCC might not fully address these emerging challenges.
- **Uneven Response:** Sometimes, the Election Commission's response to violations by powerful politicians has been slow or weak. This weakens the MCC and emboldens them to disregard the rules.
- **Limited Power:** The Commission can't directly disqualify candidates for misconduct. It can only recommend legal action, which can be a lengthy process.
- **Party Accountability Gap:** The ECI lacks the authority to deregister parties for electoral violations. This creates a situation where parties might face no real consequences for breaking the rules.

### WAY FORWARD

- **Legal Force:** A key proposal involves giving the MCC legal teeth. The Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law, and Justice (2013) recommended integrating it into the Representation of the People Act (1951) to make it legally enforceable.
- **Leveraging Existing Laws:** While not currently a legal code itself, some MCC provisions can be enforced through existing legal frameworks like the Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure, and Representation of the People Act.
- **Addressing Pre-MCC Advantage:** The Law Commission (2015) identified a potential advantage enjoyed by incumbent parties. They highlighted the use of



government-funded advertisements to showcase achievements before the official implementation of the MCC. To ensure a level playing field, the Commission suggested a ban on such advertisements in the months leading up to elections.

- **Monitoring Digital Channels:** Utilising technology, including AI-powered systems, can offer valuable support in monitoring and preventing MCC violations on social media and other digital platforms. This can enhance the effectiveness of the code in the digital age.

## ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF JUDGES ACCEPTING OFFICIAL POSITION AFTER RETIREMENT

### WHY IN THE NEWS ?



- Recently, after the announcement of the dates of 2024 Lok Sabha general elections in India, former Calcutta High Court judge Abhijit Gangopadhyay has resigned from his post and has joined a major national political party of India.
- After former Kolkata High Court judge Abhijit Gangopadhyay joined a major political party in India soon after resigning from his post, yet again such steps have been taken by a judge of the High Court and Supreme Court in India. Discussion has started again on the appropriateness and importance of lifting.
- There was talk in India after President of India Ramnath Kovind nominated Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi of the division bench of the Supreme Court, which gave the verdict in the case of construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya, as a member of the Rajya Sabha after his retirement. After this, are the moral implications of accepting any kind of official position by the judges of the Supreme Court of India or the

judges of the High Courts, right or wrong?

- In 1967, former Chief Justice of India (CJI) Koka Subba Rao resigned three months before his retirement to contest the presidential elections as an opposition candidate.
- Justice Baharul Islam of the Supreme Court of India tendering his resignation to contest the Lok Sabha elections in 1983, six weeks before his retirement, also brought into focus the ethical implications of judges accepting official positions after retirement.

### ETHICAL CONCERNS RELATED TO A JUDGE ACCEPTING ANY KIND OF OFFICIAL POSITION AFTER HIS RESIGNATION FOR POLITICS IN INDIA :



- The concerns arising from the resignation of a judge from the judiciary to join active politics in India have some significant ethical implications which affect the perception of judicial propriety and judicial impartiality and integrity of the judiciary in India. **Which are as follows –**

#### JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY IN INDIA :

- Law in India or Judicial independence is extremely important to ensure the rule of law and democracy.
- In India, a judge joining a political party soon after retirement raises questions about the independence of the judicial decisions delivered by him while holding the office of a judge and raises concerns regarding the influence of political views on the functioning of the judiciary. Does.
- In a democratic country like India, it is extremely important for judges to remain free from interference or influence from any outside party, including political institutions.

#### JUDICIAL IMPARTIALITY TOWARDS JUSTICE OF THE JUDICIARY IN INDIA :

- Any judge in India is expected to be neutral in ensuring justice and to give his decision only on the basis of facts and law without being influenced by his personal biases or any kind of external pressures and he should Ensure fairness.
- Any judge in India being involved in any kind of controversies after joining any political party has been questioned over his impartiality while hearing the cases involving political matters by the decisions of the judges currently holding the post of judge. Keeps rising.
- Any former judge holding any kind of official position reduces the confidence of the people of India in the ability of the judiciary to deliver justice impartially and gives rise to many types of doubts.

**TO ENSURE THE CONFIDENCE AND TRUST OF THE INDIAN PUBLIC TOWARDS THE JUDICIARY :**

- Due to the democratic form of governance in India, the Indian judiciary depends on the trust and confidence of the Indian public towards the judiciary to fulfill its role in the Indian society.
- Involvement of any judge in India in accepting any official position undermines the perception of judicial integrity and impartiality of the Indian Judiciary which greatly affects the public confidence in the entire judicial system in India. Is.
- Resignation of judges from the judiciary in India for active participation in politics may create a situation of doubt among the public about the independence and integrity of the Indian judiciary.

**SITUATION OF CONFLICT OF MUTUAL INTERESTS :**

- Supreme Court or High Courts in India Judges or any judge are expected to avoid conflicts of interest and maintain the integrity of the judicial process.
- The involvement of judges in India in political activities, particularly their controversial statements and judgments while serving on the Court, has raised concerns regarding their personal conflicts of interest.

**ISSUE OF APPOINTMENTS TO OFFICIAL POSTS AFTER RETIREMENT FROM THE POST OF JUDGE :**

- The last few years, some retired judges had accepted government posts after retirement in India. This practice of retired judges assuming official positions

after retirement completely blurs and doubts the concept of clear demarcation between the judiciary and the executive of India.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TODAY	WHAT THE TWO BODIES ARE	CRITICISMS
<p><b>Oct 16, 2015</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supreme Court on Friday quashed two acts. It declared unconstitutional a law to replace the collegium system in higher judiciary</li> <li>It also quashed the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Act, that laid down how the NJAC would function</li> <li>Verdict delivered by 5-judge Constitution bench comprising justices J S Khehar, J Chelameswar, MB Lokur, Kurian Joseph and AK Gool</li> <li>It also rejected Centre's plea to refer matter to a larger bench</li> <li>Bench said it was willing to take suggestions to improve existing system; post hearing for Nov 3</li> </ul>	<p><b>COLLEGIUM SYSTEM</b> CJI and four senior-most SC judges recommend appointments and transfers of judges. In effect since 1993, this system referred to as 'judges-selecting-judges', is not in the Constitution but was created by two SC judgements in 1990s</p> <p><b>NJAC</b>   Body to replace Collegium system of appointing judges. To consist of 6 people 1) CJI, 2) two senior-most SC judges, 3) law minister and 4) 2 'eminent persons'. Eminent persons nominated for three-year term by Chief Justice, PM &amp; Leader of Opposition (LS)</p> <p><b>Friday's apex court judgment strikes down a 15-year quest spearheaded by the Law Commission, Parliament, 20 states, successive govts and different public forums to change the process of appointing judges</b></p>	<p><b>OF THE COLLEGIUM SYSTEM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centre said the system created an 'imperium in imperio' (empire within an empire) within Supreme Court</li> <li>It was criticised on grounds that it created a 'give-and-take' culture</li> <li>It was said that politicians/actors would get easy relief from courts while commoners would struggle</li> </ul> <p><b>OF THE NJAC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Court on Friday held executive involvement in appointment of judges impinges upon independence of judiciary</li> <li>It violates principle of separation of powers between the executive and the judiciary, that is a basic feature of the Constitution</li> </ul>
<p><b>HOW THE NJAC CAME ABOUT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2002   Justice Venkataswaliah Committee set up by NDA-1 in its report for the first time suggested a National Judicial Commission for the appointment of judges</li> <li>Act through a constitutional amendment</li> <li>Dec 31, 2014   Act gets Pranab Mukherjee's assent</li> <li>April 13, 2015   The NJAC Act is notified</li> <li>Aug 2014   Govt passes NJAC</li> </ul>	<p>Association and others filed batch of petitions in Supreme Court challenging NJAC, claiming NJAC infringed on judiciary's independence</p> <p>Oct 16   Apex court scraps NJAC Act. Back to collegium system</p>	<p><b>SOME SHARP TAKES EITHER SIDE</b></p> <p><b>April 30, 2015</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does an eminent person determine the ability and integrity of an advocate practising in J&amp;K or TN and his suitability for appointment as a judge? Tell us some names whom the government considers eminent" —sc</li> <li>Take for example M S Swaminathan. Why can't he be chosen as an eminent person? Government wants every section of society to have a say" —A. G. KARNAT</li> </ul> <p><b>June 11, 2015</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The collegium did not follow the principle of meritocracy in appointing judges and hence, many undeserving persons got appointed as judges" —A. G. KARNAT</li> <li>Mistakes will be there, whether this system or that system... Question is how serious are they" —sc</li> </ul>

**POST-RETIREMENT TASKS FOR JUDGES IN INDIA :**

- The Indian Constitution does not explicitly prohibit judges from taking up post-retirement assignments, but to minimize potential conflicts of interest between them. 'Cooling-off period applies' Suggestions have been given to do so.
- Regarding the post-retirement cooling-off period for judges in India, former CJI of the Supreme Court of India, R.M. Lodha had recommended a cooling-off period of at least 2 years.
- 'Cooling-off period' concept of any kind in India Officers retiring from sensitive posts are generally debarred from accepting any other appointment for two years.
- Someone high and sensitive in India In case of holding posts, this cooling-off period is based on breaking the connection between the previous appointment and the new appointment through a sufficient period of time.

**INTERNATIONAL SYSTEMS OF REAPPOINTMENT OF JUDGES TO OFFICIAL POSTS OUTSIDE INDIA :**

- Outside India, judges of the Supreme Court in the United States never retire in their lifetime but remain in office for life to prevent conflict of interest between the judiciary and the executive.
- In the United Kingdom, there is no law preventing judges from taking any type of jobs after retirement, but no judge has yet done so, which suggests a different view on the issue of their post-retirement

roles. Explains the concept of.

## CONCEPT OF RESTATEMENT OF VALUES OF JUDICIAL LIFE :

### EVOLVING SYSTEM

<b>Pre-1993</b> Law minister selected judges in 'consultation' with judiciary	been associated with that particular HC in the past. <b>SC appointments cleared by 5-member collegium</b> including CJI and 4 other seniormost judges
<b>Post-1993</b> Judiciary assumed 'primacy' by creating collegiums in Supreme Court and high courts. HC judge is appointed after a collegium of judges of that court suggests his/her name, which then has to be cleared by a three-member SC collegium. The 3 judges include the CJI and at least one SC judge who has	<b>2014</b> Proposed judicial appointments commission seeks to make selection process more transparent. To have <b>6 members, including law minister, CJI, 2 SC judges and 2 'eminent persons'</b> . At least 5 members will have to agree on each judge's appointment

- The Supreme Court of India in the year 1997 outlined the ethical standards and principles for judges. '**Concept of Restatement of Values of Judicial Life**' Was adopted. Following are the main provisions of the 'Restatement of Values Concept of Judicial Life':--
- Judges in India must be neutral and impartial: not only must justice be done, but justice must also be seen to be done. The conduct of judges should also reaffirm the faith and trust of the people of India in the impartiality of the judiciary.
- Judges in India should also avoid establishing close relations with individual members of the Bar Council.
- In India, if any member of a judge's family is a lawyer by profession, that judge should refrain from hearing cases related to his family member and also should not participate in public debates on political matters.
- Judges in India should not seek any means of financial gain and should not speculate in shares or engage in any kind of trade or business.
- Judges in India must always be conscious of the fact that their lives and their judicial decisions are always under public scrutiny.
- Therefore, the actions of judges in India should not benefit even the high position they hold.

### SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM :

The following constitutional and judicial reforms can be made as a solution to the problem of judges accepting official position after retirement –

### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 14TH LAW COMMISSION :

- The recommendations of the 14th Law Commission Report, 1958 have suggested a solution to this type of problem with judges in the Indian Judiciary which lays emphasis on developing such a system.
- The recommendations of the 14th Law Commission Report, 1958 ensure providing financial security to the judges without compromising the independence of the Indian judiciary in any way.

### TO INCREASE TRANSPARENCY IN THE JUDICIARY OF INDIA :

- There should be greater transparency in the process of appointing retired judges to official posts after retirement in India.
- The selection criteria for appointing judges to post-retirement official positions in India should be strictly transparent, ensuring open competition throughout the appointment process, as well as public disclosure of the reasons behind each appointment.

### TO ENSURE PROMOTION OF HIGH JUDICIAL ETHICS AND HIGH STANDARDS IN THE JUDICIARIES OF INDIA :

- Strengthening ethical guidelines and standards for judges during their tenure and after retirement can help maintain the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary in India.
- Judges should be encouraged to give priority to public confidence in the judiciary over personal interests.

### IT SHOULD BE MANDATORY TO IMPOSE COOLING-OFF PERIOD IN INDIA :

- Based on the recommendations suggested by former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India, R.M. Lodha, there should be a mandatory cooling-off period between the retirement of a judge and his eligibility for any post-retirement assignment.
- Having this mandatory cooling-off period in India will help ensure impartiality while reducing potential conflicts of interest of judges or other high officials. This will promote fairness and transparency in the high level judiciary or even the high level exec-



utive in India.

## CONCLUSION :

### NJAC VS COLLEGIUM SYSTEM

<h4 style="color: #0070c0;">WHAT'S COLLEGIUM SYSTEM</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Collegium system based on Three Judges Cases</li> <li>● Under it, appointment of judges are made by Chief Justice of India and four most senior Supreme Court judges.</li> <li>● Has no constitutional backing.</li> <li>● Constitution of India's Article 124 says appointments to be made by President in consultation with judges as President may deem necessary.</li> <li>● Critics say it is a closed-door system which lacks transparency</li> </ul>	<h4 style="color: #0070c0;">WHAT'S NJAC</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● NJAC was a body created to end the two-decade-old Supreme Court Collegium system of judges appointing judges.</li> <li>● Was passed by Lok Sabha on August 13, 2014. Was passed by Rajya Sabha a day later.</li> <li>● Will consist of six people – CJI, two senior-most Supreme Court judges, Law Minister and two 'eminent' persons.</li> <li>● Critics say judges in NJAC will need support of others to push a name through. They fear judicial independence being compromised.</li> </ul>
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- The resignation of a former judge of the Calcutta High Court and his decision to enter politics raises significant ethical concerns regarding judicial impartiality, independence, conflict of interest, public trust and professional responsibility in the high level judiciary in India. Expresses.
- The main reason for these concerns in India is the far-reaching impact it has on the integrity and credibility of India's judiciary, underscoring the importance of maintaining high ethical standards in justice and administration in India.
- The impartiality and judicial activism of the judiciary in India, even after the division bench of the Supreme Court that delivered the verdict in the case of construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya and the nomination of Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi as a member of the Rajya Sabha by the President of India Ramnath Kovind A question was raised regarding. So in India There is a need to clearly define the ethical implications of judges accepting official positions after retirement and to ensure judicial impartiality, transparency and judicial neutrality, so that the Indian public has confidence in the higher judiciary and does not have to worry about what happens to it. Courage can be generated to protest against any injustice or violation of fundamental rights and Indian citizens can say against any kind of injustice that –**"I will see you in court."**
- **"I will see you in court"** It is not just a slogan or quotation but it is a symbolic belief of the Indian people in the justice that will be done to them and the trust they have in the higher judiciary of India. Therefore,

before the judges in India accept the official post after retirement, it should be considered that the Indian public still has faith in the higher judiciary of India. What has to be done is that even today the basic elements of democracy and the faith and trust of the people of India towards the judiciary still exist in India. It is on the shoulders of the higher judiciary and the higher executive to keep this trust and confidence of the Indian people alive. So that democracy remains in India and people have faith in justice. This is the victory of democracy in the true sense.

## PRELIMS QUESTIONS

### Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners Bill, 2023.

1. The salary and service conditions of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners will be the same as that of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court In this bill.
2. The search committee will be chaired by the Prime Minister and will also include two members not below the rank of Cabinet Secretary In this bill.
3. The Election Commission of India was established on 25 May 1950.
4. This Bill replaces the Election Commission (Conditions of Service and Conduct of Business of Election Commissioners) Act, 1991.

**Which of the above statement / statements is/ are correct?**

- (A) Only 1 and 3  
 (B) Only 2 and 4  
 (C) Only 3  
 (D) Only 4

### Q2. Consider the following statements:

1. The role of the District Planning Committee in Panchayati Raj is to Coordinate development activities in the district
2. The term duration for Panchayats as per the 73rd Amendment Act is 5 years
3. 21 years is the minimum age to contest elections for the post of a Panchayat Samiti member



**How many of the above statements are correct?**

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) None

**Q3. Consider the following statements regarding language.**

1. The Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution deals with language, in which a total of 24 official languages are mentioned.
2. Article 351 of the Indian Constitution empowers the Central Government to issue directions for the development of Hindi language.
3. Inadequacy of teaching resources in India is also an important hindering aspect in implementing the three-language formula at the school level.
4. There is no relation between language and culture because language and culture are contradictory to each other.

**Which of the above statement / statements is/are correct?**

- (A) Only 1 and 3
- (B) Only 2 and 4
- (C) Only 1 and 4.
- (D) Only 2 and 3

**Q4. Consider the following statements**

1. The Election Commission of India is a five-member body.
2. Union Ministry of Home Affairs decides the election schedule for the conduct of both general elections and bye-elections.
3. The Election Commission resolves the disputes relating to splits/mergers of recognised political parties.

**How many of the statements above are correct?**

- (a) Only one
- (b) only two
- (c) All three

(d) None

**Q5. Consider the following statements regarding judges accepting official positions after retirement in India.**

1. Regarding the post-retirement cooling-off period for judges in India, former CJI of the Supreme Court of India, R.M. Lodha had recommended a cooling-off period of at least 2 years.
2. The recommendations of the 14th Law Commission Report, 1958 ensure providing financial security to the judges without compromising the independence of the Indian judiciary in any way.

**Which of the above statement / statements is/are correct ?**

- (A) Only 1
- (B) Only 2
- (C) Neither 1 Nor 2
- (D) All of the above.

## ANSWERS

S. No.	Answer
1.	D
2.	B
3.	D
4.	A
5.	D

## MAINS QUESTIONS

**Q.1. Highlighting the various dimensions/aspects of judges accepting official post after retirement in India, discuss whether it is constitutional and appropriate for judges to accept official post after retirement in India or unconstitutional and inappropriate ? present rational thoughts.**

**Q2. Underlining the current challenges faced by the Election Commission of India, Discuss whether the powers given to the Election Commission of India are relevant in solving the current challenges? give a logical answer.**

**Q3. What are the primary functions of the Cantonment Boards, and how do they ensure balanced representa-**

tion between civilians and the military?

**Q4. Analyse the potential challenges and concerns associated with merging cantonments with municipalities, particularly in terms of security, finances, and resistance from existing power structures.**

**Q5. What do you understand about the three – Language formula? Discuss logically how the three-language formula under the provisions of the National Education Policy 2020 strengthens India’s democracy by tying together India’s unity, integrity and cultural identities ?**

**Q6. How does the Model Code of Conduct impact the level playing field for political parties and candidates during elections?**

# SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

## MANAGEMENT OF NUCLEAR WASTE

### WHY IN THE NEWS?

India has reached a noteworthy achievement in its nuclear endeavours by successfully loading the core of the Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR). Despite this advancement towards energy autonomy, India encounters the intricate task of effectively handling nuclear waste as it moves forward.

### ABOUT NUCLEAR WASTE

- In a nuclear fission reactor, **atoms** of specific elements are **bombarded by neutrons**. **When a nucleus absorbs a neutron**, it **becomes unstable and splits**, releasing energy and forming nuclei of different elements. **For instance**, a uranium-235 (U-235) nucleus, upon absorbing a neutron, can split into barium-144, krypton-89, and three neutrons. If the resulting elements (barium-144 and krypton-89) cannot undergo further fission, they become classified as nuclear waste.
- The fuel utilised in a nuclear reactor becomes irradiated during operation and eventually needs to be replaced, at which stage it is termed **spent fuel**. **Nuclear waste is highly radioactive and necessitates storage in specialised facilities designed to prevent leakage** and contamination of the surrounding environment.

### MANAGEMENT OF NUCLEAR WASTE

#### COOLING DOWN

Freshly removed spent fuel is highly radioactive and generates significant heat. To address these concerns, it's initially placed in underwater pools located at the nuclear power plant itself. The water serves a dual purpose: shielding the environment from radiation and acting as a coolant for the spent fuel. After a period of several years, the radioactivity and heat levels decrease sufficiently, allowing for the next step.

#### REPROCESSING: EXTRACTING USABLE FUEL

Some countries choose to reprocess spent fuel. This process involves chemically separating out usable fissile materials like plutonium and uranium from the waste.

These recovered materials can then be used to create new fuel for reactors, maximising resource utilisation. However, it's important to note that reprocessing generates additional radioactive waste streams that also require management.

#### TREATMENT AND PACKAGING

Whether reprocessed or not, spent fuel undergoes treatment and conditioning to ensure safe storage and disposal. Liquid waste streams are treated to remove radioactive contaminants, while solid waste might be compacted, solidified, or encased in robust containers for long-term management.

#### SECURE STORAGE

Nuclear waste necessitates secure storage facilities that prevent any possibility of leaks, environmental contamination, or unauthorised access. There are different storage options available:

**On-site storage:** Used fuel can be stored within the confines of the nuclear power plant itself, typically in specially designed concrete casks.

**Interim storage facilities:** These centralised facilities provide temporary storage for spent fuel from multiple reactors before final disposal.

**Long-term repositories:** The ultimate goal is to dispose of nuclear waste in deep geological repositories. These repositories are carefully selected underground geological formations, chosen for their stability and isolation from the environment, ensuring the safe containment of radioactive waste for thousands of years.

#### DISPOSAL

Deep geological disposal serves as the final resting place for nuclear waste. Here, the waste is carefully placed deep underground in a meticulously chosen geological formation. This isolation from the environment minimises the risk of human exposure or environmental contamination for millennia.

#### CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS IN HANDLING THE NUCLEAR WASTE

**Technical Hurdles:** Effectively managing radioactive waste presents a complex set of technical hurdles. Ensuring secure containment at every stage, from storage



facilities to transportation, is paramount. Long-term monitoring of these sites is also crucial to detect any potential issues.

**Balancing Safety and Security:** Nuclear waste facilities operate under a tightrope walk, balancing safety and security concerns. Stringent regulations are in place to prevent accidents, leaks, or unauthorised access to this hazardous material.

**Impact on Environment:** Improper disposal or mismanagement of nuclear waste poses a significant threat to the environment. Contamination of land, water, and air can have devastating consequences for ecosystems and human health, making responsible waste management an absolute necessity.

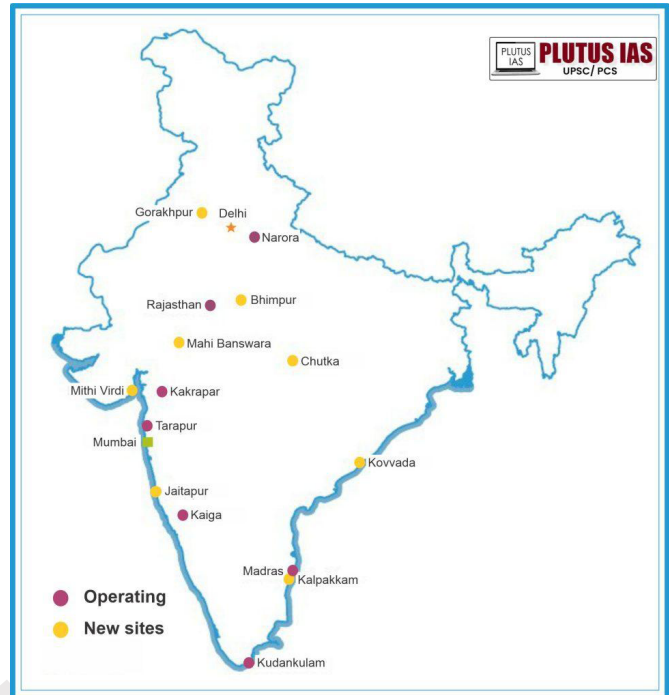
**Public Perception:** The concept of nuclear waste disposal often faces public resistance. Concerns about safety, potential environmental damage, and the ethical implications of storing radioactive material for millennia contribute to this public apprehension.

**Financial Burden:** Handling nuclear waste is an expensive undertaking. The financial responsibility for this process falls on governments, utility companies, and, ultimately, taxpayers. Additionally, the long-term liability associated with managing and disposing of this waste raises further economic concerns.

#### INDIA'S APPROACH TO NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT INVOLVES SEVERAL STRATEGIES AND FACILITIES

- According to a **2015 report by the International Panel on Fissile Materials (IPFM)**, India operates reprocessing plants located in **Trombay, Tarapur, and Kalpakkam**. The **Trombay** facility primarily **focuses on reprocessing spent fuel** from research reactors, while the **Tarapur and Kalpakkam facilities handle spent fuel from pressurised heavy water reactors (PHWRs)**.
- Furthermore, India manages **on-site waste generated** during the operation of nuclear power stations, including low and intermediate-level radioactive waste.
- However, operational challenges have been noted. The **IPFM report highlights delays in the implementation of stage II of India's nuclear program**, attributing these delays to subpar performance at the reprocessing facilities in Tarapur and Kalpakkam.
- Moreover, the **upcoming operation of the Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (Stage II of India's nuclear program)** presents new challenges. This reactor's

functioning will introduce complexities in the distribution of fission products and transuranic elements compared to conventional reactors.



## NUCLEAR ENERGY SUMMIT IN BRUSSELS

### WHY IN THE NEWS?

The Prime Minister of Belgium, Alexander De Croo, and the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Rafael Mariano Grossi, co-chaired the first Nuclear Energy Summit held in Brussels on March 21.

### ABOUT NUCLEAR ENERGY SUMMIT

The first Nuclear Energy Summit, held in Brussels on March 21-22, 2024, marked a significant step forward for clean energy. This summit stemmed from a collaborative effort between the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) program, Atoms4NetZero, which directly supports member states in harnessing nuclear energy for net-zero transitions.

- **Atoms4NetZero:** Launched at COP27, Atoms4NetZero equips decision-makers with data-driven energy scenario modelling. This initiative embodies the spirit of multilateral decarbonisation efforts, recognising the crucial role of nuclear energy alongside other renewable sources.
- **The Urgency for Nuclear Energy:** The 2023 UN Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai solidified

the critical need for nuclear energy. A declaration signed by 22 world leaders emphasised the need to triple atomic capacity by 2050. This urgency stems from nuclear power's exceptional capabilities:

- **Unmatched Carbon Reduction:** Nuclear power boasts a carbon footprint four times lower than solar farms and other renewables like wind, hydro-power, and geothermal.
- **Reliable Baseload Power:** Unlike weather-dependent renewables, nuclear plants deliver uninterrupted energy, making them a vital component of a robust renewable energy mix.
- **Economic and Land-Use Efficiency:** Nuclear power plants offer lower operating costs, a smaller land footprint, and a longer lifespan compared to most other renewable energy sources.

### KEY THEMES OF THE SUMMIT

**Nuclear Energy for Net-Zero:** The summit aimed to reaffirm the commitment of participating nations to leveraging nuclear power as a clean and reliable source of energy in achieving net-zero emissions targets. Discussions focused on integrating nuclear energy into national energy mixes alongside renewables, fostering international cooperation on research and development, and ensuring the safe and secure operation of nuclear facilities.

**Socio-Economic Benefits:** Beyond climate change mitigation, the summit explored the broader socio-economic benefits of nuclear energy. These include job creation in the nuclear industry, energy security through reduced dependence on fossil fuels, and potential applications in areas like desalination and medical isotope production.

**Addressing Public Concerns:** The summit acknowledged the public's lingering anxieties surrounding nuclear safety and waste disposal. Leaders emphasised the importance of transparency, robust regulatory frameworks, and effective communication strategies to build public trust in nuclear technology.

**Financing and Investment:** A crucial aspect of the discussions involved mobilising financing and attracting private investment for new nuclear projects. The summit explored innovative financing models and the role of multilateral organisations like the IAEA in facilitating investment flows towards safe and sustainable nuclear energy projects.

### POTENTIAL OUTCOMES AND CHALLENGES

The success of the Nuclear Energy Summit will depend

on translating its pronouncements into concrete action. Here are some potential outcomes and the challenges that need to be addressed:

- **Renewed International Cooperation:** The summit could foster closer collaboration between nations on sharing best practices, technology transfer, and joint ventures in nuclear energy development. However, overcoming geopolitical rivalries and ensuring non-proliferation safeguards remain critical considerations.
- **Technological Innovation:** Advancing nuclear technologies like small modular reactors (SMRs) could address concerns about scalability and cost-effectiveness. Nevertheless, research and development efforts require sustained funding and international collaboration.
- **Waste Management Solutions:** Developing safe and long-term solutions for radioactive waste disposal remains a major concern. Continued investment in research on geological repositories and exploring alternative fuel cycles that minimise waste generation are essential.
- **Public Acceptance:** Rebuilding public trust in nuclear energy necessitates addressing safety concerns effectively. Open communication, robust safety regulations, and a clear commitment to transparency are crucial.

### FINANCING NUCLEAR POWER

Building nuclear plants is expensive. But what if a group of investors, like energy companies or factories, joined forces?

- **The Cooperative Model: Sharing the Burden:** This model allows multiple investors to borrow money and share the responsibility for building and running a power plant. Think of it like a team effort, with everyone chipping in.
- Finland's successful "**Mankala model**" demonstrates the power of cooperation-
- Companies co-own the plant, sharing construction and running costs.
- No one gets extra profits, but everyone gets clean energy at a fair price based on their investment.
- **Benefits of Cooperation:** This approach spreads the risk, simplifies project management, and allows companies to focus on clean energy production,

not profit. By working together, more countries can afford nuclear power, paving the way for a cleaner future.

### PRELIMS QUESTION

**Q1. Which concept suggests that the threat of retaliation with nuclear weapons can prevent an adversary from initiating a nuclear attack?**

- (a) Arms control
- (b) Nuclear disarmament
- (c) Mutual assured destruction (MAD)
- (d) Disarmament diplomacy

**Q2. In India, why are some nuclear reactors kept under "IAEA safeguards" while others are not?**

- (a) Some use uranium, and others use thorium
- (b) Some use imported uranium, and others use domestic supplies
- (c) Some are operated by foreign enterprises, and others are operated by domestic enterprises
- (d) Some are State-owned, and others are privately owned

**Q3. Consider the following statements:**

1. Aluminium is used to shield containers of nuclear waste.
2. Boron is commonly used in nuclear reactors to absorb excess neutrons.

**Which of the above statements is/are correct?**

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

### ANSWERS

S. No.	Answers
1.	C
2.	B

3.

B

### MAINS QUESTION

**Q1. Assess the role of technological advancements in shaping the future of nuclear deterrence. How do developments in missile defence systems, cyber warfare, and autonomous weapons systems influence the dynamics of deterrence strategies?**

**Q2. Evaluate the ethical implications of relying on nuclear deterrence as a strategy for national security. Consider the risks of accidental or intentional nuclear escalation and the potential humanitarian consequences.**



# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

## INDIA – BHUTAN BILATERAL MULTIDIMENSIONAL RELATIONS

### WHY IN THE NEWS ?



- Tshering Tobgay, who recently took over as the Prime Minister of Bhutan in January 2024 at the invitation of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, paid a five-day maiden official visit to India starting from March 14, 2024.
- The official visit included Bhutan's Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay along with four cabinet ministers as well as senior officials of the Royal Government of Bhutan.
- Apart from this official meeting between the President of India Draupadi Murmu and the Prime Minister of Bhutan Tshering Tobgay, he also held talks with the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi on bilateral and multidimensional relations.
- After Tshering Tobgay also met Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and other dignitaries from India, she also traveled to Mumbai to meet business leaders to discuss increasing investment from India into Bhutan and the two countries have also visited. Also signed agreements.
- The visit proved to be an important and historic moment to strengthen bilateral and multi-dimensional cooperation and address mutual concerns. This official meeting provided an important opportunity

to both India and Bhutan to review the progress in their partnership and discuss ways to enhance co-operation.

- This enduring friendship and mutual relationship between India and Bhutan in South Asia serves as a strong foundation for mutual prosperity and regional stability.
- India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the interim budget of 2024 – 25 '**Neighbourhood First Policy**' Bhutan has been provided the largest share of the economic assistance portfolio in line with. An allocation of Rs 2,068 crore has been made to Bhutan in the year 2024 – 25 as compared to the allocation of Rs 2,400 crore in the year 2023 – 24.
- The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) of India has been allocated Rs 22,154 crore by the Finance Ministry of India for the financial year 2024 – 25.



### INTRODUCTION TO IMPORTANT FACTS RELATED TO BHUTAN :



- It is situated between India and China and is surrounded by "**land locked 'Bhutan'**" It is an important country of South Asia.

- The area of Bhutan is only 8,394 square kilometers and its population is only 7.7 lakh, which is much smaller than the area and total population of any major district of any state of India, but Bhutan is a sovereign nation.
- Bhutan is a country surrounded by an abundance of mountains and valleys.
- The capital of Bhutan is Thimphu.
- At present, Bhutan has become a democratic country after the first democratic elections were held in Bhutan in the year 2008.
- Despite being a country with a democratic system, the King of Bhutan is the head of that nation.
- official name of bhutan 'Kingdom of Bhutan' which in Bhutanese language is 'Druk Gyal Khap' 'which means –'Land of Thunder Dragon'.

#### LONGEST RIVER OF BHUTAN :

- The longest river of Bhutan is Manas River whose length is 376 km. More than.
- The Manas River forms the border between southern Bhutan and India in the Himalayan foothills.

#### IMPORTANT AREAS OF BILATERAL MULTIDIMENSIONAL RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND BHUTAN :



Following are the important areas of bilateral multi-dimensional relations between India and Bhutan –

#### BILATERAL FOOD SECURITY COOPERATION BETWEEN INDIA AND BHUTAN :

- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India and the Food and Drugs Authority of Bhutan have signed a bilateral agreement to cooperate and assist each other in mutual food safety measures.
- This bilateral agreement will make bilateral trade

between the two countries easier and convenient by ensuring compliance with food safety standards and reducing the cost of compliance with food safety standards.

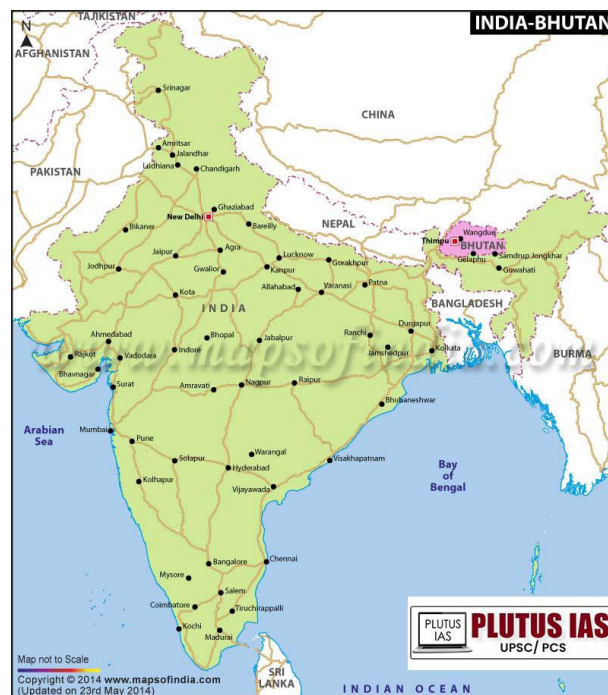
#### PETROLEUM AGREEMENT BETWEEN INDIA AND BHUTAN :

- India and Bhutan have signed an important agreement on the supply of petroleum products to promote economic cooperation and development in the hydrocarbon sector and to ensure reliable and continuous fuel supply from India to Bhutan. The bilateral and multi-dimensional relations between India and China have become even stronger.

#### SIGNING OF BILATERAL AGREEMENT FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND ITS CONSERVATION :

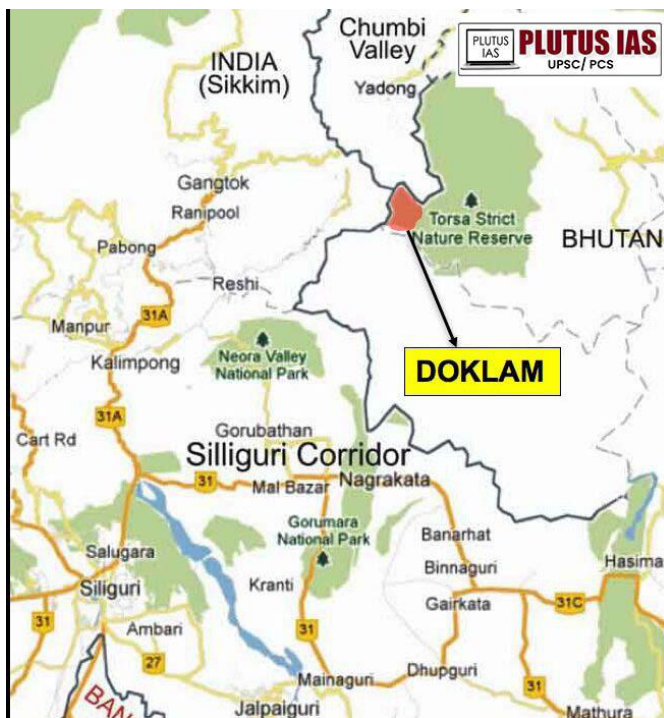
- India and Bhutan have also signed an MoU to enhance and conserve energy efficiency, which reflects the commitment towards sustainable development within the mutual relations between the two countries.
- This memorandum of understanding According to India aims to assist Bhutan at all levels in enhancing energy efficiency in households in Bhutan, promoting the use of energy efficient appliances in Bhutan and developing standards and labeling schemes.

#### TO BE OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE FOR REGIONAL SECURITY AND IN RESOLVING THE DOKLAM AREA BORDER DISPUTE :





- This is the first official visit of Bhutanese Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay to India. And it is also linked to the ongoing talks to resolve the border dispute between China. Whose main objective is to establish regional security in South Asia, especially in resolving the border dispute of Doklam area, which is very important.
- China and Bhutan to resolve their mutual border dispute. A plan was agreed upon in the month of August 2023.
- This agreement, after the ongoing conflict between India and China that started in 2017 due to China's attempt to build a road in the area associated with the Doklam area, four years later, in the month of October 2021, an agreement was formally signed between the two countries. Was signed.



#### GELEPHU MINDFULNESS CITY TO BE BHUTAN'S REGIONAL ECONOMIC HUB :

- Having a regional economic center of Bhutan in Gelephu is an important step towards regional development and connectivity of Bhutan.
- Launched by the King of Bhutan in December 2023, the project aims to establish a "Gelephu Mindfulness City" spread over 1,000 square kilometers.
- Unlike traditional financial centers featuring skyscrapers, Gelephu prioritizes sustainable development, focusing on non-polluting industries such as

IT, education, hospitality and health care.

- Located at the intersection of India's "Act East Policy" and emerging connectivity initiatives in South-East Asia and the Indo-Pacific region, Gelephu holds a key strategic importance in promoting economic integration and trade facilitation.

#### BHUTAN BEING MULTIDimensionally Important For India :

##### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPORTANCE :

- Bhutan is one of the few countries in the world that has pledged to remain carbon-neutral and India has been a major help in helping Bhutan achieve this goal.
- India has provided assistance to Bhutan in areas such as renewable energy, forest conservation and sustainable tourism.

#### CULTURAL IMPORTANCE BETWEEN INDIA AND BHUTAN :

- Both India and Bhutan are predominantly populated by Buddhists. Therefore, India and Bhutan have an important cultural relationship, both historically and culturally, which mutually strengthens the shared cultures between the two countries.
- India has also provided significant assistance to Bhutan in preserving its cultural heritage.
- Some Bhutanese students have also always been coming to India to pursue higher education.

#### BHUTAN BEING STRATEGICALLY Important For India :

- Bhutan shares borders with both India and China and its geographical location makes it a strategically important buffer state or buffer center for India's external border security.
- India has provided significant assistance to Bhutan in developing sectors such as defense, infrastructure and communications, which has helped Bhutan maintain its sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- India has also provided significant assistance to Bhutan in building and maintaining border infrastructure such as roads and bridges to strengthen its defense capabilities and ensure its territorial integrity.
- During the Doklam standoff between India and China in 2017, Bhutan played a key role in allowing In-



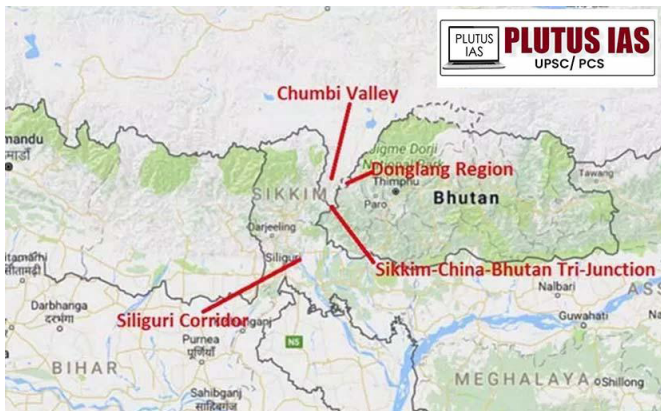
dian troops to enter its territory to oppose Chinese incursions. Therefore, Bhutan is a very important country for India from a strategic and security point of view.

### ECONOMICALLY IMPORTANT FOR INDIA :

- India is Bhutan's largest trading partner and Bhutan's major export destination. Both the countries have deep relations both in terms of mutual import and export.
- Bhutan's hydropower potential is an important source of its revenue and India has also provided significant assistance, both technical and economic, in developing Bhutan's hydropower projects.

### IMPORTANT CHALLENGES OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND BHUTAN :

#### INDIA – CHINA BORDER DISPUTE AND DOKLAM STAND-OFF :



- There is a 699 kilometer long border line between India and Bhutan, which has remained peaceful till present. However, in recent years there have also been some incidents of incursions by the Chinese army on its border.
- The Doklam standoff at the India-China-Bhutan tri-junction was a major flashpoint of conflict until 2017. Therefore, even in the present times, the increase in any kind of border related dispute may create tension in the relations between India and Bhutan.

#### CHINA'S INCREASING INFLUENCE INSIDE BHUTAN :

- China's growing presence in Bhutan, especially along the disputed border between Bhutan and China, has raised concerns for India from a strategic perspective.

- India has been Bhutan's closest ally and has played an important role in protecting Bhutan's sovereignty and security.
- Bhutan and China have not yet established any diplomatic or strategic relations, but the two countries have maintained friendly relations with each other. Which may become a matter of concern for India in future.

#### HYDROPOWER PROJECTS FORM A MAJOR PILLAR OF BHUTAN'S ECONOMY :

- Bhutan's hydropower sector is a major pillar of its economy and India has been a major partner in its development. However, there are concerns over the terms of some hydropower projects in Bhutan, which are considered very favorable to India.
- Indian involvement in this sector in Bhutan has also been opposed by some Bhutanese citizens due to the terms of some hydropower projects being considered very favorable for India.

#### ISSUES RELATED TO BUSINESS :

- India is Bhutan's largest trading partner, accounting for more than 80% of Bhutan's total imports and exports. Although there are some concerns in Bhutan regarding trade imbalance, Bhutan imports more goods from India than it exports from India.
- Bhutan has always sought greater access to the Indian market for its products, which could help it reduce its trade deficit.

#### CONCLUSION / SOLUTION :



- Visa-free movement of people between India and Bhutan can strengthen sub-regional cooperation.
- India can help Bhutan boost its economy by investing in infrastructure development, tourism and other sectors. This will not only help Bhutan become self-reliant but will also generate employment op-

opportunities for the people there.

- India and Bhutan can promote cultural exchange programs to promote greater understanding and appreciation of each other's culture, art, music and literature.
- India and Bhutan can strengthen their strategic cooperation to address common security concerns. They can work together to combat terrorism, drug trafficking and other international crimes.
- India – Bhutan relations are characterized by a unique blend of historical ties, strategic cooperation and shared values. The enduring friendship between these two countries has stood the test of time. It has evolved into a multidimensional partnership covering various areas of cooperation. As India and Bhutan grapple with the complexities of the 21st century, they must build on their past achievements. They will have to find new ways to collaborate and connect. By promoting economic growth, promoting cultural exchange and strengthening strategic cooperation, India and Bhutan can realize their shared vision of peace, prosperity and mutual respect.
- Frequent high-level exchanges between India and Bhutan have laid a strong foundation for the development partnership between India and Bhutan.
- During this bilateral and multilateral meetings between India and Bhutan, PM Tobgay of Bhutan has invited PM Modi to visit Bhutan, highlighting the mutual trust and equal partnership between the two countries.
- This official visit of Bhutan PM Tshering Tobgay has strengthened the commitment between India and Bhutan to deepen cooperation in various fields, strengthen long-term relations and pave the way for a brighter future together. Which is strategic for India. This is a sign of a bright future between the two countries from a cultural, economic and trade point of view.

### PRELIMS QUESTIONS

**Q.1. Consider the following statements in the context of bilateral and multi-dimensional relations between India and Bhutan.**

1. India is Bhutan's largest trading partner, accounting for more than 50% of Bhutan's total imports and ex-

ports.

2. official name of bhutan' Kingdom of Bhutan ' which in Bhutanese language is' Druk Gyal Khap' ' It is called, which means –'Land of Thunder Dragon'.
3. At present Bhutan is a democratic country, whose head is the Prime Minister of Bhutan.
4. India has provided the largest share of the economic assistance portfolio to Bhutan in line with India's ' Neighbourhood First' policy' in the Interim Budget 2024-25.

**Which of the above statement / statements is/ are correct?**

- (A) Only 1 and 3
- (B) Only 2 and 4
- (C) Only 1 and 4
- (D) Only 2 and 3

### ANSWERS

S. No.	Answers
1.	B

### MAINS QUESTIONS

**Q.1. In the context of India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy, highlight the various aspects of bilateral and multidimensional relations between India and Bhutan and discuss what could be the solution to the Doklam standoff between India and China. Present a logical solution.**

# ECONOMY

## RBI AMENDED TIMEFRAME OF REGULATORY SANDBOX

### WHY IN THE NEWS?

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently extended the duration for accomplishing various stages of a Regulatory Sandbox (RS) from seven months to nine months. Additionally, the revised RS framework mandates sandbox entities to adhere to the provisions of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act of 2023.

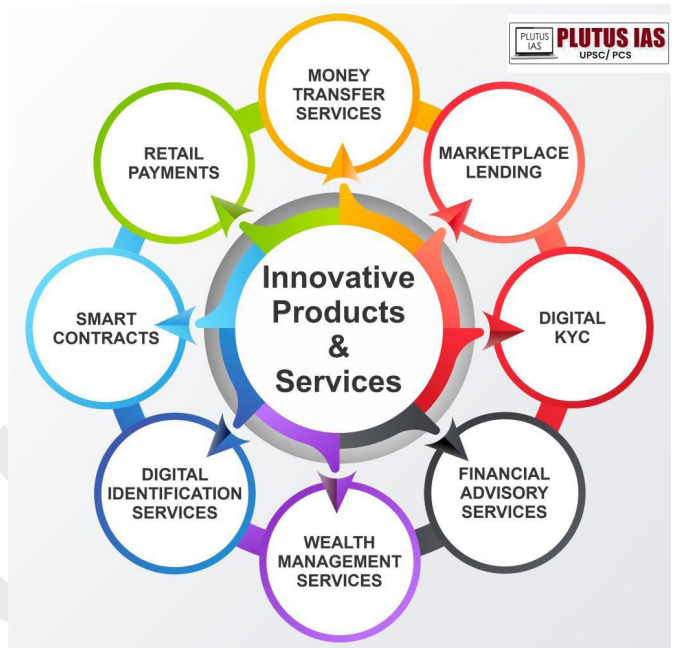
### ABOUT REGULATORY SANDBOXES

- Regulatory sandboxes are **controlled environments** where businesses can **test new financial products or services** under the watchful eye of regulators.
- They act as a **“safe space”** for businesses to experiment with potentially disruptive innovations without immediately facing the full weight of existing regulations.
- This allows regulators to observe these innovations first-hand and potentially adapt regulations to be more innovation-friendly while ensuring consumer protection.

### KEY BENEFITS OF REGULATORY SANDBOXES:

- **Innovation Testing Ground:** Regulatory sandboxes provide a platform for innovative technology-driven companies, especially fintech startups, to test their ideas with real customers in a limited setting. This allows them to gather valuable feedback and refine their products before a wider launch, accelerating the development cycle and time-to-market for new financial solutions.
- **Safer Experimentation by Design:** By offering a controlled environment with relaxed regulations, sandboxes allow for experimentation with potentially risky financial products or services. This can lead to faster development and deployment of innovative solutions that address financial inclusion gaps or improve efficiency in existing financial processes while minimising potential harm to consumers through close regulatory oversight and safeguards.
- **Evolving Regulations for a Dynamic Landscape:** Through observing the performance of new financial products within the sandbox, regulators gain

valuable insights into emerging technologies and their impact on the financial landscape. This allows them to develop more dynamic and evidence-based regulations that keep pace with innovation, fostering a regulatory environment that is both supportive and responsible.



### RECENT UPDATES TO INDIA'S REGULATORY SANDBOX:

India's Reserve Bank of India (RBI) established its Regulatory Sandbox framework in August 2019. A recent update to the framework reflects the evolving regulatory landscape and underscores India's commitment to fostering a responsible and inclusive financial system:

**Data Protection Compliance:** The updated framework requires sandbox participants to ensure compliance with the **Digital Personal Data Protection Act of 2023**, highlighting the importance of data privacy in the financial technology sector. This ensures that innovative solutions are developed with robust data security and consumer privacy protections in place.

**Extended Timelines:** Acknowledging the complexities of developing innovative financial solutions, the timeline for navigating the sandbox process has been **extended from seven to nine months**. This provides participants with more time to refine their products and conduct thorough testing within the sandbox environment.



**Broadened Eligibility:** The updated framework **expands the pool of potential sandbox participants** to include not only fintech startups but also established banks, financial institutions, and partnerships supporting financial services businesses. This **encourages wider participation and fosters collaboration within the financial ecosystem**. By bringing together established players and innovative startups, the sandbox can act as a catalyst for more co-creation and knowledge sharing, accelerating the development of solutions that benefit a broader range of financial service users.

#### CHALLENGES REGARDING REGULATORY SANDBOXES

- **Limited Agility:** The controlled environment can restrict the experimentation pace, hindering rapid iteration crucial for startups.
- **Lengthy Approvals:** Obtaining permissions and relaxed regulations can be time-consuming, delaying experiments.
- **Legal Uncertainty:** The absence of clear legal protections within the sandbox discourages innovators from exploring potentially disruptive ideas.
- **Post-Sandbox Hurdles:** Even after successful testing, innovators might face additional regulatory hurdles before full market launch.
- **Data Privacy:** Balancing innovation with robust data security is paramount.
- **Resource Constraints:** Regulatory bodies may lack resources to efficiently oversee multiple sandbox participants.
- **Global Harmonisation:** The lack of harmonisation between sandboxes in different countries can create hurdles for innovators seeking to expand globally.

#### WAY FORWARD

**Streamlined Approvals:** Implement a tiered system based on complexity, leverage technology for online applications, and set clear timelines with accountability.

**Regulatory Clarity:** Provide guidance on eligible innovations and relaxed regulations. Explore a “sandbox-within-sandbox” approach for high-risk ideas and conditional approvals after successful testing.

**Collaboration:** Establish a dedicated sandbox support unit and facilitate knowledge sharing between participants, regulators, and experts. Encourage mentorship from successful alumni.

**Global Harmonization:** Participate in international discussions and explore mutual recognition of sandbox results with other countries.

**Resource Optimization:** Partner with universities or explore RegTech solutions to streamline oversight.

### PRELIMS QUESTIONS

**Q1. What is the primary purpose of a Regulatory Sandbox?**

- (a) To provide tax breaks for innovative businesses
- (b) To offer a safe space for testing new financial products
- (c) To simplify the process of company registration
- (d) To establish new government regulations

**Q2. Consider the following statements:**

1. Regulatory Sandboxes can be called as a form of Controlled innovation environment.
2. A key benefit of a Regulatory Sandbox for consumers is that it reduces transparency in the financial system.
3. Regulatory Sandboxes are most beneficial for Large, established corporations.

**How many of the statements above are correct?**

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

### ANSWERS

S. No.	Answers
1.	B
2.	A

### MAINS QUESTION

**Q1. How important is it for India to focus on the global harmonisation of regulatory sandboxes with other countries? What are the potential benefits and drawbacks?**

# ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

## WATER CONSERVATION : MANAGEMENT AND PROMOTION

### Why in the News ?



- Recently on March 22, 2024 'all over the world ' world Water Day "Celebrated.
- World Water Day, held annually on 22 March since 1993, is an annual day of the United Nations. The main objective of which is to focus on the importance of freshwater.
- The main objective of World Water Day is to spread or raise awareness about people living without access to safe water.
- The main focus of World Water Day is to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 6 and achieve the goal of providing clean water and sanitation for all by 2030.
- **The main theme of World Water Day 2024 is "Leveraging Water for Peace".**
- Recently India's Jal Shakti Ministry has launched an initiative to optimize rainwater harvesting and other sustainable water management systems. **'Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain – 2024 Campaign ' start on have done.**
- India's Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekawat launched the campaign in New Delhi and also underlined the important role of women in water management, conservation and sustainability.

- This program's theme was based on ' **Water power through women power** ' in India.
- In India, it was organized at the Convention Center of New Delhi Municipal Council, as part of the fifth edition of the campaign of the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- **India 'Water power through women power ' The campaign seeks to establish a strong link between women empowerment and sustainable management of water resources.**
- Among the main attractions of this event organized in India " **Jal Shakti Abhiyaan 2019 to 2023' – A public-led movement towards water security** ' Screening of a documentary titled and two books – **'Jal Shakti Abhiyaan: 2019 to 2023'** and **'Champions of 101 Water Life Mission'** and **'Women Water Warriors'** The talks were also unveiled.
- According to a recently released report, India's Bengaluru city is in a serious water crisis, leading to significant shortages in various sectors.
- According to the report, 223 out of 236 taluks of Karnataka are affected by drought, including Mandya and Mysore districts, which are the water sources of Bengaluru.
- As summer heats up in India, about 7,082 villages across Karnataka are at risk of drinking water crisis in the coming months.

### HISTORY OF WORLD WATER DAY :

- SunIn the Environment and Development Conference held in Brazil in 1992, a proposal was passed on the topic of celebrating 'World Water Day' and availability of clean water.
- Adopting this resolution in 1992, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) announced to celebrate 'World Water Day' on 22 March every year at the global level.
- Therefore, 'World Water Day' was celebrated for the first time in the year 1993.
- In 2010, the UN recognized the right to safe, clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right.
- The main objective of recognizing the right to safe,

clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right is to focus people's attention on the global water crisis.

#### IMPORTANCE OF WORLD WATER DAY :

- The main focus of World Water Day is to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6.
- The main goal of celebrating World Water Day is to provide clean water and sanitation to all by 2030 at the global level.

#### PRESENT NEED OF WATER CONSERVATION :

- According to the United Nations, 1.4 million people die every year from diseases caused by lack of sanitation, hygiene and clean water. About 25% of the world's population lacks access to clean water, and almost half the global population lacks clean toilets. The global water situation is projected to increase by 55% by the year 2050.
- Water is extremely essential for everyday activities in human life. Proper use of water plays an important role in the management of freshwater reserves. An average person wastes up to 45 liters of water a day through his daily activities. Therefore, making a few changes in daily water usage can save a considerable amount of water for future use.
- More than 3 billion people around the world migrate to other countries due to water dependence.
- Only 24 countries worldwide have signed cooperation agreements for shared water use.
- Public health and prosperity, food and energy systems, economic productivity, and environmental integrity all depend on a managed water cycle.

#### Current status of management and promotion for water conservation in India :

- At present, due to increasing demand for water in all areas and changing rainfall patterns, dependence on groundwater has increased. There is a great need to make concrete efforts with appropriate action for its proper management and sustainable use.
- According to the United Nations World Water Development Report 2022, groundwater accounts for approximately 99 percent of all liquid freshwater on Earth which has the potential to provide social, economic and environmental benefits to society.

- Groundwater accounts for about 50 percent of the total water used for domestic purposes, including drinking water.
- India's population is about 1.4 billion, which is the highest in the world. The population is expected to increase to 1.7 billion by 2050.
- According to the World Bank, India is home to 18 percent of the world's population, but has enough water resources for only about 4 percent of the people.
- Nearly 90 million in India do not have access to safe water. The normal annual rainfall of India is 1100 mm which is more than the world average rainfall of 700 mm.
- According to data released by the India Meteorological Department, the southwest monsoon during June-August 2023 has been below normal in 42 percent of the districts. In August 2023, rainfall in the country was 32 percent below normal and 62 percent below normal in the southern states.
- India received the least rainfall in August last year after 1901 i.e. in the last 122 years.
- Less rainfall in India will not only have a serious impact on Indian agriculture, but it can also lead to severe water shortage in various areas of the country.
- The net quantity of water that can be used in a year in India is estimated at 1,121 billion cubic meters (BCM). However, data published by the Water Resources Ministry shows that the total water demand will be 1,093 BCM in 2025 and 1,447 BCM in 2050. As a result, there is a possibility of a huge reduction in water availability in the next 10 years.
- India exploits groundwater the most in the world. This quantity is more than the combined exploitation of the world's second and third largest groundwater exploiters (China and the United States).
- According to the Falkenmark Water Index, about 76 percent of the people in India are already facing water shortage. Although in India only 8 percent of the extracted groundwater is used as drinking water. 80 percent of it is used in irrigation and the remaining 12 percent is used by industries.
- According to the NITI Aayog report, by the year 2030 the country's water demand will double the available supply.



### Solutions to be taken to overcome the problem of water crisis in India and for water conservation :

- There can be many remedial measures to reduce the water crisis and its over-exploitation in India. In which **some remedial measures are as follows** –
- Water consumption can be measured and limited using modern technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Remote Sensing etc.
- Expanding water sources, improving water efficiency, and protecting water resources can improve water availability and quality in India.
- Technical measures like Buried Clay Pot Plantation Irrigation can also be used to overcome the water crisis in India and for water conservation which can save water and improve crop productivity.
- To overcome the water crisis in India and for water conservation, it is extremely important to improve the policies at the government level to conserve water resources and expand micro irrigation techniques to ensure accurate and correct consumption of water. Can go.
- Watershed management can prove to be a good option for water conservation and groundwater recharge in India.
- The main objective of development of water harvesting in India is to conserve every drop of rain water, control soil erosion, increase soil moisture and recharge, water harvesting per unit area and per unit water despite adversities of weather. Productivity has to be maximized.
- Special emphasis should be given to the traditional system of water conservation in India.
- In order for the rivers flowing in different areas of India to remain perennial, it is very important to make policies at the government level and make efforts for water conservation.
- It is extremely important to establish a water bank in each area along with creating a clear framework for water budgeting and water auditing in villages in rural areas of India.
- Groundwater scientists can play an important role in water conservation. Also, symposiums and seminars should be organized from time to time to bring awareness about water conservation in the society. In the present situation, for a permanent solution to

this problem, everyone will have to make collective efforts for water conservation and promotion.

### Challenges facing water management in India :

The following challenges exist before water management in India. Only by finding solutions to these challenges can India move forward in the direction of water conservation, management and promotion.

- To reduce the gap between demand and supply of water.
- Providing sufficient water for food production and balancing use among competing demands.
- To meet the growing demands of metros and other big cities.
- Treatment of wastewater.
- Sharing of water with neighboring countries and co-basin states etc.

### Conclusion / Path to solution :



- Bureaucratic, non-transparent and non-participatory approach still persists in the functioning of water governance institutions in India. Therefore, it cannot be denied that there is a need for improvement in the water administration of the country.
- It is necessary that reliable information and related

data about natural disasters like drought and flood are available to us as soon as possible so that they can be dealt with in time and possible damage can be reduced.

- It is necessary that important decisions regarding raising the ground water level and regulating ground water use are taken immediately.
- The condition of the rivers in the country remains pathetic and the efforts of the present government to make the river Ganga pollution free may not have achieved the expected success, therefore it is necessary to seriously consider the condition of the rivers in the country and to make them pollution free. For this, the above mentioned policies should be formulated.
- Water is the most valuable resource on earth and we have to protect it not only for ourselves but also for future generations.
- At present, when India as well as the entire world is facing water crisis, it is necessary to pay serious attention to this. There are policies related to water management or conservation in India, but the problem lies at the level of implementation of those policies.
- Therefore, the laxity in the implementation of policies should be removed and their better implementation should be ensured so that the biggest problem of water mismanagement in the country can be addressed.

## PRELIMS QUESTIONS

**1. Consider the following statements regarding water conservation: management and promotion.**

1. The main objective of World Water Day is to spread or raise awareness about people living without access to safe water.
2. 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain – 2024 Campaign' has been jointly launched by the Ministry of Human Resource and Development and Nehru Yuva Kendra in India.
3. Main topic/theme of World Water Day 2024 "**Leveraging Water for Peace**" is.
4. Main theme of World Water Day 2024 in India "**Water power through women power**" Was.

**Which of the above statement/ statements is/are correct?**

- (a) Only 1, 2 and 3
- (b) Only 1 and 4
- (c) Only 2 and 4
- (d) Only 2, 3 and 4

## ANSWERS

S. No.	Answers
1.	D

## MAINS QUESTIONS

**Q.1. Underlining the importance of World Water Day, discuss what is the importance of water conservation, management and promotion in India and describe the challenges coming in its way and suggest ways to solve the challenges?**

# SOCIAL ISSUE

## GENDER INEQUALITY INDEX 2022

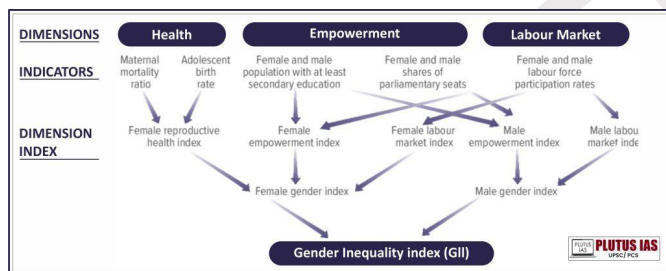
### WHY IN THE NEWS?

The Gender Inequality Index for 2022 was published by the UNDP as part of their Human Development Report for 2023/2024 on March 13, 2024. India is ranked 108th out of 193 countries. Compared to the Gender Inequality Index of 2021, where India ranked 122nd out of 191 countries, there is a notable improvement of 14 ranks in the 2022 index.

### ABOUT THE GENDER INEQUALITY INDEX

The Gender Inequality Index (GII) is a comprehensive metric that measures gender inequality in three major areas: reproductive health, empowerment, and the labour market. This index serves as a vital tool to gauge the level of gender inequality within a society, shedding light on the gaps between men and women in various aspects of life.

### DIMENSIONS OF THE GENDER INEQUALITY INDEX



- **Reproductive Health:** This dimension is evaluated based on indicators such as the maternal mortality ratio and the adolescent fertility rate. It highlights the health outcomes and challenges faced by women in terms of reproductive well-being.
- **Empowerment:** The empowerment dimension of the GII focuses on factors like the share of parliamentary seats held by each gender and levels of secondary and higher education attainment. It reflects the extent to which women are politically and educationally empowered within a society.
- **Labour Market:** Women’s participation in the workforce is a crucial aspect of the GII’s evaluation of the labour market dimension. It considers paid work, unpaid work, and the active pursuit of employment

by women, providing insights into gender disparities in economic participation.

### INTERPRETATION OF THE GENDER INEQUALITY INDEX

- The GII ranges from 0 to 1, where 0 signifies gender equality, indicating that women and men fare equally, while 1 represents significant gender inequality, where one gender faces substantial disadvantages across all measured dimensions.
- Higher values on the GII indicate worse achievements in terms of gender equality, emphasising areas where improvements are needed to bridge the gender gap effectively.

### IMPLICATIONS OF GENDER INEQUALITY

- Gender inequality restricts women’s opportunities, freedom, and interactions with others, impacting their ability to access resources, make independent decisions, and contribute to society.
- Low status and inequality can have detrimental effects on women’s physical and mental health, autonomy, and control over household resources, ultimately affecting their well-being and that of their children.
- Addressing gender inequality is crucial for promoting social development, economic growth, and overall well-being within a society.

### UNEQUAL LIVES: THE MANY FACES OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN INDIA

India, a nation of immense diversity, continues to grapple with significant gender inequality. While the country boasts progress in various sectors, disparities between men and women persist across various aspects of life.

- **Unequal Access to Education:** Girls are often denied schooling due to societal pressures and poverty. This lack of education limits their opportunities and perpetuates the cycle of inequality.
- **The Patriarchal Shadow:** Deep-seated patriarchal norms dictate that men hold primary power in society. This relegates women to domestic roles and hinders their participation in public spheres.
- **Workplace Discrimination:** Women face challeng-

es in entering and advancing within the workforce. Unequal pay, lack of maternity benefits, and a rigid work environment discourage women's professional aspirations.

- **Violence Against Women:** Domestic violence, sexual harassment, and honour killings are grim realities for many women in India. Fear of violence creates a climate of insecurity and restricts their freedom.
- **Skewed Sex Ratio:** India has a long-standing issue of a skewed sex ratio, with a preference for sons leading to female infanticide and sex-selective abortions. This imbalance has social and demographic consequences.
- **Harmful Practices:** Child marriage, dowry demands, and restrictions on mobility are deeply ingrained practices that limit girls and women's agency and well-being.

#### INITIATIVES TAKEN BY THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT TO TACKLE GENDER INEQUALITY

- **Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao:** This flagship campaign aims to improve the sex ratio and promote girls' education.
- **Samagra Shiksha:** This program ensures gender-inclusive quality education at all levels, with a focus on creating safe and girl-friendly schools.
- **Stand-Up India:** This scheme provides loans and support to women entrepreneurs, encouraging their participation in businesses.
- **Mahila E-Haat:** This online platform empowers women entrepreneurs and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) by facilitating market access for their products.
- **One-Stop Centre (OSC) Scheme:** These centres offer integrated support to women affected by violence, including legal aid, counselling, and medical assistance.

### IMPORTANCE OF GLOBAL HAPPINESS INDEX 2024 IN INDIA

#### WHY IN THE NEWS ?



- Finland remained the happiest country in the world for the seventh consecutive year in the annual Global Happiness Index 2024, published on March 20, 2024, sponsored by the United Nations.
- According to the Global Happiness Index 2024, the top 10 happiest countries around the world are Denmark, Iceland, Sweden, Israel, Netherlands, Norway, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Australia. According to the declared findings of this index – after countries like Libya, Iraq, Palestine and Niger **India is at 126th position in this index like last year.**
- **'International Day of Happiness' is celebrated every year on 20 March all over the world.** The main objective of celebrating this day is to inform the people of many countries around the world about the importance of happiness as a way of living a healthy life and to make people aware to adopt a healthy lifestyle. On this occasion, people of many countries around the world are made aware globally about the importance of happy moments in their lives and the benefits that come from these happy moments in their lives.
- The Nordic countries have retained their place among the 10 happiest countries according to the Global Happiness Index 2024, with Denmark, Iceland and Sweden still far behind Finland.
- Afghanistan, which has been plagued by humanitarian devastation since the Taliban took control in 2020, is at the bottom among the 143 countries included in the Global Happiness Index 2024 and is the unhappiest country in the world.
- For more than a decade and for the first time since the index was published, the US and Germany are not among the top 20 happiest countries in the world.
- According to this index of 2024, America and Germany are the happiest countries globally for the first time, ranked 23rd and 24th respectively.
- According to the Global Happiness Index 2024, China is ranked 60th, Nepal 93rd, Pakistan 108th, Myanmar 118th, Sri Lanka 128th and Bangladesh 129th.
- Among Middle Eastern countries, UAE was ranked 22nd and Saudi Arabia was ranked 28th. Singapore ranked 30th among Asian countries. Japan is at 50th place and South Korea is at 51st place.
- World Happiness Index Gallup World Poll Data is a



publication of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, run by the Oxford University Research Centre, UN Sustainable Development and WHR. This reflects a worldwide demand for greater focus on happiness and well-being as a benchmark of government policy. It reviews the state of happiness in the world today and shows how the science of happiness explains individual and national variations in happiness.



**MAIN TOPICS OF GLOBAL HAPPINESS INDEX 2024 :**



- Every year at the global level, a theme is set to celebrate the International Day of Happiness.
- The main theme of the International Day of Happiness for the year 2024 is – **“Reconnecting for Happiness: Building Resilient Communities”**.
- The United Nations invites people from all countries globally to join in celebrating the International Day of Happiness.

**HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL DAY OF HAPPINESS :**



- The history of this day starts from 2013 when it was first celebrated by the United Nations (UN).
- It was launched in 2012 by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to recognize the importance of happiness in life and ways to make people happy.
- According to the United Nations, this proposal was initiated by Bhutan.
- On 12 July 2012, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed a resolution declaring 20 March as the International Day of Happiness.
- The first ‘International Day of Happiness’ was celebrated in the year 2013.
- Therefore, since 2013, this day has been celebrated globally on 20 March every year.
- Bhutan had recognized the value of national happiness on national income since the early 1970s. Bhutan had adopted the goal of gross national happiness over gross national product.
- Bhutan during the 66th session of the United Nations General Assembly **“Happiness and Well-Being: Defining a New Economic Paradigm”** also hosted a high-level meeting on the topic.

**UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS NETWORK (UN SDSN) :**

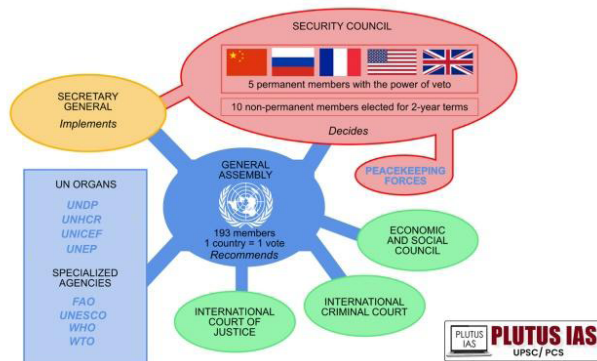


- The UN SDSN has been operating under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General since 2012.
- SDSN mobilizes global scientific and technical expertise to promote practical solutions for sustainable development, including the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Climate Agreement.
- It aims to accelerate joint learning and promote integrated approaches that address the interconnected economic, social and environmental challenges

facing the world.

- SDSN works closely with United Nations agencies, multilateral funding institutions, the private sector and civil society.
- The organization and governance of the SDSN aims to enable a large number of leaders from all sectors and diverse backgrounds to participate in the development of the network.
- SDSN has a small secretariat with offices in New York, New Delhi and Paris.

**IMPORTANT FACTORS FOR RANKING COUNTRIES IN THE GLOBAL HAPPINESS INDEX :**



Global Happiness Index Provides ranking to many countries of the world on the basis of many factors. **of which the important factors are the following –**

1. Real social support,
2. GDP per capita,
3. Freedom of choice in one’s life,
4. Healthy Life Expectancy and Life Expectancy Rate
5. Perceptions of corruption and
6. Kindness.

**IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL HAPPINESS DAY :**



- Being happy in the life of every person in this world is a universal right and no citizen of any country in the world can be deprived of the right to be happy.
- We find many ways to please our loved ones. When we see them smiling and happy, those moments only make our life happy.
- International Day of Happiness provides an opportunity to make everyone around us happy with the small efforts or initiatives we take.
- Through this day, we include efforts ranging from inspiring people to achieve happiness in their lives to having a ‘positive attitude towards life’ in the lives of the people around us and spreading it to our society. Can.
- The United Nations General Assembly calls for a more inclusive, equitable and balanced approach to economic development globally that promotes happiness in the lives of all around us and a vision of well-being for all and humanity. gives.
- International Happiness Day encourages people to consider that there are many ways to find happiness, including meaningful relationships with others, good mental health and self-fulfillment. The day is celebrated as a call for people and organizations to focus on raising the standards of happiness of themselves and their communities.
- An important purpose of celebrating International Day of Happiness is that if we accept the happy moments in our life and make them the main priority, then we can make this world a happier and more fulfilling place for all the people. Are.
- This index/report states that women are less happy than men in every region around the world.☐
- According to this index, with the increase in age at the global level, the gender gap (difference based on gender) is also increasing.

**IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL HAPPINESS INDEX IN THE CONTEXT OF INDIA :**



- India has always had the feeling of “**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**” towards all the living beings of this entire world.
- Indian religious scriptures have always “**May all be happy and may all be in good health. Let all look for the good and let no one suffer.**” That is, all the creatures of this world should be happy, all should be free from diseases, all should be witnesses of auspiciousness and no one should have to become a part of sorrow. There should not be any trouble in anyone’s life.
- In India, older age is associated with higher life satisfaction. However, older Indian women have reported lower life satisfaction and lower life expectancy than older men.
- This index also states that education and its caste also play an important role among the people in India.
- Older adults with secondary or higher education and people from higher social castes reported higher life satisfaction than their counterparts without formal education and people from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- The index also shows that India’s elderly population is the second largest in the world. Of which there are 14 crore Indians aged 60 years and above, which is second only to their Chinese counterparts of 25 crore.
- The average growth rate of Indians aged 60 years and above in India is three times higher than the overall population rate of the country.
- Education found among Indian citizens in terms of happiness in India. Higher education, caste and social status (his status on economic basis) is also an important factor.

### PRELIMS QUESTIONS

**Q.1. Consider the following statements regarding Global Happiness Index 2024.**

1. India ranks 126th among 134 countries in this index.
2. In this index, Finland is the happiest country in the world for the seventh consecutive year in 2024.
3. The main theme of the International Day of Happiness for the year 2024 is – “Reconnecting for Happiness: Building Resilient Communities”.

4. Afghanistan ranks lowest among the countries included in the Global Happiness Index 2024 and is the happiest country in the world.

**Which of the above statement / statements is/ are correct ?**

- (A) Only 1 and 3
- (B) Only 2 and 4
- (C) Only 1 and 4
- (D) Only 2 and 3

**Q2. What dimensions does the Gender Inequality Index assess?**

- (a) Economic, social, and political
- (b) Reproductive health, empowerment, and the labour market
- (c) Education, employment, and healthcare
- (d) Infrastructure, environment, and governance

**Q3. In patriarchal societies, which of the following is often associated with the relegation of women to domestic roles and limited participation in decision-making processes?**

- (a) Gender fluidity
- (b) Gender parity
- (c) Gender asymmetry
- (d) Gender segregation

### ANSWERS

S. No.	Answers
1.	D
2.	B
3.	D

### MAINS QUESTION

**Q1. Compare and contrast India’s Gender Inequality Index score and rank with another country that has a similar population size, and speculate on the reasons behind any disparities or similarities.**



**Q2. Outline the factors used to provide ranking in the Global Happiness Index and discuss which factors are important for happiness in the context of India and what measures can be taken to improve the overall happiness rank in the lives of the citizens of India. What can be the solution for this? Present a logical explanation.**

PLUTUS IAS